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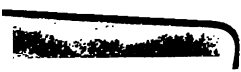
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St. Mary Magdalen.

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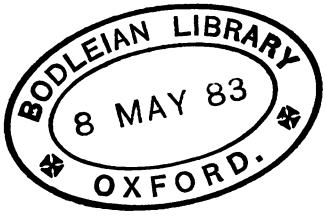
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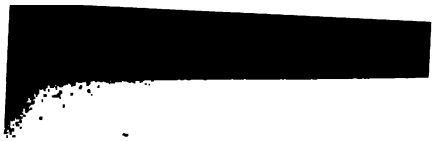
TRANSLATED BY E. A. HAZELAND.

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1880.



LONDON:
BURNS AND OATES.



To the

SACRED HEART OF JESUS,

to the

IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY,

and to

The Loved Ones in Heaven and on Earth,

This Little Translation

is

humbly dedicated.

Feast of the Sacred Heart,

1880.





ST. MARY MAGDALEN.

As the traveller descends the Rhone, there is a spot where the mountains on the left bank of the river recede, the horizon widens, the sky becomes clearer, the soil more fertile, and the air more balmy; it is the land of Provence. Backed by the Alps, it gradually recedes from them, its valleys lose sight of the lessening summits, and stretch onwards, like an Italian or Grecian promontory, towards that

sea by which all historic shores are bathed. The Mediterranean, the Rhone, and the Alps, are the three boundaries of Provence, the plains and gorges of which are traversed and enlivened by the impetuous waves of its own river, the Durance. It is impossible to behold this land and not recognise, in its natural and in its historic features, the impress it bears of its connection with the most celebrated countries of antiquity. An oriental hue was early imparted to it by Grecian colonies, and Rome, to whom it owes its name has bequeathed to it ruins worth of a power which refused to no a share of a greatness sufficient the universe. When the anci

world had ceased to flourish, Provence, rich in her souvenirs, richer still in herself, retained, amid the general dismemberment, her own individuality. She had her language, her poetry, her customs, her nationality, and her glory—gifts, which in certain conjunctures, make of a small territory, a great land.

Then, when modern empires had taken form, and defined their limits, Provence, too feeble to withstand destiny, fell to the lot of France, as a heaven-sent gift, and after being to the ancients the western home of beauty, became to us the first port where we discern traits of Italy, Greece, and Asia; spots which enchant the

memory, and names which stir the soul.

But if nature and history have done much for Provence, religion has perhaps done more. There exist in the world certain spots which have been consecrated and predestinated from eternity. Egypt witnessed the birth of Moses; Arabia is still radiant with the lightnings on Sinai, and the sands of the desert yet retain the trace of the people of God; before them Jordan rolled back her waves, and from the cedars of Lebanon to the palm-trees of Jericho, Palestine was destined to hear and to see things, of which the human race will eternally discourse. On those shores the Son

of God was born, there He taught the world, and there, to redeem it, He shed His blood. Rome, in her turn—Rome, the universal legatee, received within her walls the successors of Christ, and her astonished Capitol, after long serving as a theatre of the blood-stained triumphs of war, yielded readily to the chaste pomps of victorious love. There, too, are the spots consecrated by religion, holy places which seem the heritage rather of Heaven than earth. And yet, at the allotment of these blessings bestowed on the world, one share—an unique one, the last print, as it were, of our Saviour's life on earth—was reserved for the land of Provence.

On leaving Marseilles, and bend-



ing your steps towards the Alps, you enter a valley running parallel with the sea, the waves of which are hidden by lofty mountains. A second range towers on the opposite side, and, enclosed by these walls, the valley approaches an amphitheatre which seems abruptly to bar its progress, whilst a river, bordered by trees, glides peacefully through extensive meadows, watering a thousand dwellings. Its name is obscure as its waters; it serves as a guide to the traveller, and after spreading itself over a vast plain, is suddenly arrested by mountains, turns sharply to the left, plunges through narrow gorges, becomes a torrent and passing through a maz

and sunny city, one of the queens of the Mediterranean; he heard the sound of waves, and the din of men, and from all points of the horizon were seen vessels, less impelled by the winds, than by the treasures that they bore. Now, all is still and poor, and from the quiet and sterility of the desert, one would imagine one's self transported to the inaccessible retreats of the Thebaïd. A few fallen walls are visible in the midst of the plain, and at the extreme end, some houses behind the summit of

the mountain; but these vestiges of life do not diminish the solemnity of the scene. The heart feels that it has entered a solitude where God is not unknown.

In the centre of these square, lofty, curtain-like rocks, the eye discerns a habitation, suspended, as it were, and at its base a forest, the unusual aspect of which is very striking. We behold no longer either the slender and odoriferous pine of Provence, the evergreen oak, or any of the trees seen by the traveller on his route; one would think, that by some inexplicable prodigy, the north had transplanted hither all the magnificence of its vegetation. It is southern sky and soil surrou

ing English foliage, and to this there is but one exception, a single spot, two feet away, on the mountain side, where the true nature of the country again asserts itself. If you enter the dense forest, it veils you with its majesty, resembling, in its depths of shade and silence, those sacred woods which the axe of the ancients never profaned. Here, also, time alone has left its trace, and has reserved to itself the right of renewing the sap, and of felling the ancient trunks ; centuries have reigned, and will reign here still, testifying to a veneration which has its source in bygone ages, and which impresses the mind and the gaze of the spectator.



Who then has trodden this soil? Who has imprinted so lasting a trace? What is this rock? and what this forest? What spot is this where all appears so grand?

O Marseilles! thou didst witness the advent of the first dweller on this mountain spot. Thou sawest descend from her bark the frail being who renewed the tie between the Orient and thee! Thy first guests gave thee thy port, thy walls, thy name—to them thy very existence is due; thy second gave something more precious still,—she confided to thy care the living relics of the life of Jesus, the souls whom He loved most tenderly on earth, the last testament of the friendship of God! From the

height of His cross Jesus Christ bequeathed His Mother to S. John; but in His resurrection-splendour, midway between the vanquished shades of death and the dazzling brightness of eternal day, Jesus chose thee to be the sure asylum of his dearest friends. It is needless to name them, or tell *thee* who they were! Thou hast never ceased to remember them, thy history speaks to thee of them, thy walls have interwoven their tradition with the memories of thy first faith, and the very cradle of thy Christianity is the tomb where thou veneratest, in thy apostles, the friends of Jesus.

Thy guests were Lazarus of Bethany, and Martha his sister, who

had seen him come forth from his sepulchre, and who, even before its manifestation, had faith in the power of the Son of Man; and one other woman, sister to these, and more illustrious, more loved and more worthy of love. She, to whom it had been said: Many sins are forgiven thee, because thou lovest much; she who was the first to see and to touch Jesus on the morning of His resurrection, inasmuch as she had the first place in that heart, which loved all men even unto death.

It is of this woman that I write. Praised through the whole world by the Gospel, she needs no mortal pen to proclaim her glory to this nineteenth century. No name

stirs such echoes as does hers ; her sinfulness awakens human sympathy, and her virtue forms a link between her and the generation of the "pure of heart." Mary Magdalen touches both sides of our life ; the sinner anoints us with her tears, the saint with her tenderness ; the one embalms our wounds at the feet of Christ, the other dries them at the moment of His ascension. But although Mary Magdalen needs no human praise, we may rejoice in offering her what she needs not, and the incense which we present to her will return in benediction to our hearts ! Such is our desire, and perchance the ruins of the "Sainte-Baume" shall thrill at our voice, and Pro-

vence, roused from an indifference which does injustice to her piety, will, in her love for her holy shrines, emulate the zeal of her forefathers and the munificence of her princes!

CHAPTER I.

Of Friendship in Jesus Christ.

FRIENDSHIP is the most perfect of all human affections, because it is the most unfettered, the purest, and the deepest. In the parental tie the child has no voice, he has chosen neither father nor mother, he is born of them without any will of his, and as his young heart

expands, it feels the need of some object on whom it may voluntarily bestow itself. If his parents, but too conscious of what is lacking in the most perfect filial love, endeavour to increase his affection by childish indulgence, they usually prepare but ingratitude for themselves; and if, jealous of the sacred authority which age and reason confer on them, they exercise it with tender firmness, the child, more docile, it is true, more subdued and more submissive, acquires a feeling of fear, which, filial though it may be, forms an insuperable barrier to all oneness of sentiment.

Scarcely arrived at man's estate, the child, even of the most loving mother, desires to separate from



her, and to verify those words of Holy Scripture, at once so sweet and terrible, "A man shall leave his father and his mother and cleave unto his wife." Surely, then, here, at least, will he find that liberty of choice which is one of the conditions of love! Far from it. A thousand imperious circumstances designate to man the companion of his life. Birth, fortune, chance, dictate to him at the very moment when the heart alone should command, and, a victim crowned with drooping roses, he advances to the altar to promise all, and to give but little. How many nuptials where love is absent! How many hearths where indifference reigns! And though

soul has spoken to soul, and the rare spark of mutual affection has lent fervour to mutual vows, what snares in this very happiness, and what heralds of coming decay!

Conjugal love, though strongest of all, possesses a weakness springing from its very ardour. The senses have their share in this love. Physical beauty plays its part there, and this beauty, transitory and fragile, cannot, even while it lasts, always count on retaining its empire over the heart it has subjugated. Too often, even while the world's admiration continues, it has lost the happiness of its reign, and the incense of the crowd descends on a sad and lonely

shrine. The lovely brow has lost its charm for its former worshipper, and a horrible indifference, which one cannot even name, succeeds the rapturous love which promised to be eternal.

Even if beauty charms while it lasts, beauty itself decays. Youth, a necessary element in physical beauty, hastens to its term, and art in vain struggles with inexorable decay! The husband would fain deceive himself; he succeeds awhile, but the hour arrives when he can no longer do so, and love, which hung on these delicate features and lovely hues, seeing them no longer, vanishes gradually away.

True Friendship is not susceptib'

ırse ; founded on beauty
has its source in regions
:, and deeper than those
ır feeling. It owes not
) physical beauty. Nor
ırise from a contract
es varying interests, and
:tions an altar of which
mingled with ashes. It
)eing to a spontaneous
n's free will, and this
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tered by laws either
divine.

ıip exists for itself and
Free in its birth, it re-
; its nourishment is an
conformity of soul, a
resemblance between
le beauty of each, beauty



which the senses can discern revealed in the physiognomy, and which an ever-growing effusion of confidence manifests more and more clearly, until, in an unclouded and enduring brightness, Friendship becomes the reciprocal possession of two minds, two wills, and of two existences, free to separate, but separating never! Such an intercourse is untouched by age. The soul is ever young; superior to time, she dwells in the eternal home of spirits, and linked though she is to the body that she animates, can hold herself aloof from its weaknesses and its stains. Time and the trials and events of life do but strengthen Friendship, and the unity of feeling subsisting,

s but tested by the shocks that ıight destroy or affect it. As two ocks, overhanging the same sea, ɔ the force of which they offer an nswerving resistance, so friends ehold the wave of time in vain ttack the constancy of their earts. One must live to be sure f being loved !

But is not this a dream that I epict ? Is Friendship aught else ut a sublime and consoling name? 'here are mothers who love their ɔns, there are wives who love ıeir husbands, and imperfect as re these ties, they nevertheless ɑist. Is it so with Friendship ? or it not a flower of youth that ithers before the spring—one of ıose golden clouds that herald the

approach of day, but never witness its close?

For some long while I believed that youth was the time of friendship, and that friendship herself was but the graceful prelude to deeper affections. I deceived myself, and said: youth is too volatile for friendship—too changeable in thought and wish—and can but offer hope. On the other hand, mature age is too cold to be susceptible of this noble sentiment, it has other interests which preoccupy and enchain it. It fails in that spontaneous freeness of a soul which the world has not yet claimed, in that trusting spirit which bestows its treasures so readily, and in that courage which knows no

fear! Must I then retract the very title of my chapter, and inscribe Friendship among the dreams of Adam's race? The Gospel stays me; my own experience does the same. Doubtless I have left on my past road, as desecrated spoils, many a deceitful affection; I have seen wither in my heart the immaterial beauty of more than one loved soul; nevertheless, I could as soon doubt Religion as Friendship, and I believe in the affection of man, as I believe in the goodness of God. The difference is, that man may deceive, but God never does; and yet man is sometimes faithful, and in this he resembles God. Feeble and fallible, his friendship is the more precious for

being conceived and treasured in a vase so fragile. His mind is liable to egotism, and yet he loves sincerely; he is the denizen of an earthly body, and yet his love is pure; he lives but a day, and yet his love is eternal; this I believe, and this I know. Early childhood is the only age unsuited to Friendship; youth brings more ready sympathy; maturity more constancy; old age more detachment and depth. Friendship triumphs over rank and fortune, and over all barriers between man and man. Kings have loved their subjects, slaves have loved their masters; Friendship has its birth in the soul, and there alone is its home! When *once two souls* have met, all else

vanishes: faint image of that day when, seeing God, the very universe will be to us but as a forgotten scene. True, it is not easy to meet in a spot so retired as the soul, so hidden by the ocean that surrounds it, and by the clouds that cover it. Holy Scripture says of God that He dwells in *inaccessible light;* of the soul we may say, she dwells in impenetrable shade. We think we have approached her, and we have scarcely touched the hem of her garment. She shrinks, and withdraws just as possession seems sure; at one moment gliding from our touch, timid as a dove; flame or ice, torrent or peaceful lake, whatever the form or image that she

assumes, she is ever a rock against which we are hurled, and a port where we enter but rarely. Therefore is Friendship such a rare and divine thing; the certain mark of a great soul, and the highest of the visible rewards attendant on virtue.

Christianity, which exalts the soul and creates so many virtues, could not remain a stranger to Friendship. For example, when two Christian spouses have found in their faith the very principle of their fidelity, Jesus Christ, who has sanctified their love, has not promised it an eternal duration; nought that is of the senses can be immortal. But if the passions grow faint as beauty fades, this,

instead of being a sign of decay, is but the herald of progress. The soul does not suffer because the charms of physical beauty lose their sway; confidence, esteem, regard, the habit of intimate and mutual understanding cherishes the flame of an affection which strengthens with its purity. Tenderness survives under a new form. It is no longer the earthly feeling of former days, but the pure happiness of minds inspired by the memories of a youth which was at the same time both pure and enchanted. The virgin's crown descends from the sacred heights of Christian marriage to encircle the spouses' brow, and together they chant the canticle, which, because

it is eternal, death itself is powerless to silence. Instead of the sad desolation to which fading charms consign the living heart, Friendship arises from the chilled nuptial couch, odoriferous as a lily, perfumed with the redolence of a love that has passed, and old age itself, embalmed by this transfiguring perfume, resembles, on drawing near the tomb, those venerable trees which reserve for their last years their choicest flowers and their loveliest fruit.

Friendship is the end and supreme reward of Christian conjugal love, and also of the virtues of youth. When a young man, assisted by the omnipotent grace of Christ, submits his passions to

the yoke of chastity, he experiences a happiness proportioned to the mortification of his senses, and that necessity of loving, which is so deeply implanted in our nature, manifests itself by the eagerness with which he seeks a kindred heart, fervent and chaste as his own. He seeks not long in vain; such a heart presents itself spontaneously to him, as a plant buds forth from a congenial soil. Where sympathy is inspired, sympathy is given; and he who would awake it, needs but to bear within himself its fervent germ. Every pure heart possesses this power, and draws to itself the kindred heart, no matter at what age. But how much more readily does it attract in youth,

when the brow is adorned by winning graces, and virtue illumines it with that other beauty which pleases God Himself! Thus David appeared to Jonathan when he entered the tent of Saul, holding in his right hand the giant's head, and when questioned by the king touching his descent, replied, "I am the son of your servant Jesse of Bethlehem."[1] "*And immediately,*" says the Scripture, "*the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.*"

Strange effect of a single glance! But a moment ago, David kept his father's flocks, Jonathan was

[1] First Book of Kings, chap. xviii. ver. 1.

on the steps of a throne, in one instant the distance between them is effaced; the pastor and the prince, in the very words of Holy Writ, become but one soul. And the cause is this: in this young man, still marked by the delicacy of youth, and holding in his vigorous hand the bleeding head of a vanquished foe, Jonathan discerned the hero; and seeing that the son of his king looked favourably on him, rejoicing over his victory, and with no pride of rank, David recognised the generous impulse of a heart capable of love, and therefore worthy of being loved.

Christian Friendship, the traits of which we have just sketched,

had no place among the ancients, and neither wedded love nor the charms of youth could give it birth. Amongst them, woman was too abased to retain her hold on man's affections by the confidence she had won or the esteem she had inspired; her power vanished with her beauty, and it was rare to find it survive under a form more perfect. Old age, so grand and so touching to a Christian, only brought her, with waning beauty, the desolation of neglect,—happy if a law less hard than the heart of her spouse, still granted her a place at the domestic hearth.

As for the young man of anti*quity, he, not* chaste enough to in-

spire affection, rarely loved with an ardour free from reproach. He loved with the senses rather than with the soul. And if the name of Friendship was known to him (for man has never totally corrupted or ignored his nature), he was not susceptible of the pure affections which are awakened in us. Jesus Christ is the author of human Friendship; it existed, it is true, in the terrestrial paradise, where Adam and Eve, still covered with the veil of innocence, walked in the presence of God, feeling, each for the other, an affection whose tenderness equalled its purity. But this was only for a day, or perchance an hour; soon, filled with alarm, they shrunk from the light of day, and man

ceased to love as he had formerly loved. True, he carried away into his sad exile a constant memory of this love; and when the Son of God came to redeem him, none was astonished that the Gospel was a volume of love, and love, the volume of salvation. Tenderness and purity were not created by our Lord; they are the two divine substances of which our hearts are formed, but they are both His gift. He loved as none other loved. And among so many friendships, of which He has given us the key, I will indicate one, of which, before His advent, no trace can be seen. Jesus Christ loved the souls of men, and has transmitted to us this affection, which is the very

foundation of Christianity. No true, no living Christian, but possesses in some degree this love, circulating in our veins as the very blood of Christ. As soon as we love, whether it be in youth or in mature age, as parent or spouse, child or friend, our one desire is to save the soul that we love, and to give it, at the cost even of our own life, truth by faith, virtue by grace, peace by redemption, — God, in fine—God known, God loved, and God served. This is that love for souls, superadded to all other love, which, far from destroying, exalts and transforms it into something divine. The love of souls gives birth to Friendship; for when one has been to a poor fallen

creature a channel of the light that has shown him his degradation and raised him from it, this sublime rescue from eternal death sometimes inspires two souls with an indefinable attraction, born of happiness given and happiness received. If to this heaven-born feeling, natural sympathy is added, there springs up in the same hearts an attachment that would have no name on earth had not Jesus Christ Himself said to His disciples, *I have called you my friends.* It is a friendship such as a God incarnate, and who laid down His life for His friends, could conceive. And yet, among those souls with whom Jesus lived, and for whom He died, some were the chosen object

of His predilection. He loved all, but He loved some more than others. In Him was the very summit of affection, both human and divine. The world was surprised at the sight, and never again will it behold more than a dim image of such love, even in the most holy and heavenly friendship.

CHAPTER II.

The Friendship of Jesus at Bethany.

S. JOHN is the Evangelist of our Lord's Divinity; no other has comprehended it so well, or more faithfully related that which the

Son of Man affirmed of the Son of God, nor has any other been a more direct witness of what S. John was privileged both to see and to hear. In reading his Gospel we are astonished that Arianism could have ever existed, so striking at each step is the co-eternal union of the Word with God, and of the Son with the Father. But S. John is also privileged to be the Evangelist of the Sacred Heart. Himself the object of its predilection, no other could better relate its love, or record such touching and impressive traits, as those contained in the history of which he is one of the four narrators.

See how S. John opens the 11th *chapter of his* Gospel:

1 Now there was a certain man sick, named Lazarus of Bethania, of the town of Mary, and of Martha her sister.

2 And Mary was she who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.

3 His sisters, therefore, sent to Jesus, saying: Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick.

4 And Jesus, hearing it, said to them: This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified by it.

5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister Mary, and Lazarus.

6 When He had heard, therefore, that he was sick, He still

remained in the same place two days.

7 Then after that, He said to His disciples: Let us go into Judea again.

8 His disciples say to Him: Rabbi, the Jews but now sought to stone Thee, and goest Thou hither again?

9 Jesus answered: Are there not twelve hours of the day? If a man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world;

10 But if he walk in the night, he stumbleth because the light is not in him.

11 These things He said, and after that He said to them: Lazarus our friend sleepeth, but I go

that I may wake him out of sleep.

12 His disciples, therefore, said: Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

13 But Jesus spoke of his death, and they thought that He spoke of the repose of sleep.

14 Then, therefore, Jesus said to them plainly: Lazarus is dead.

15 And I am glad, for your sakes, that I was not there, that you may believe: but let us go to him.

16 Thomas, therefore, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow-disciples: Let us also go that we may die with Him.

17 Jesus, therefore, came and

found that he had been four days already in the grave.

18 (Now Bethania was near Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off.)

19 And many of the Jews were come to Martha and Mary to comfort them concerning their brother.

20 Martha, therefore, as soon as she heard that Jesus was come, went to meet Him; but Mary sat at home.

21 Martha, therefore, said to Jesus: Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

22 But now also I know that whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee.

23 Jesus said to her: Thy brother shall rise again.



24 Martha said to Hi
that he shall rise aga
resurrection at the last
25 Jesus said to her:
Resurrection and the
that believeth in Me, al
be dead, shall live:
26 And every one t
and believeth in Me, sh
for ever. Believest thou
27 She said to Him:
I have believed that
Christ, the Son of the
who art come into this
28 And when she had
things, she went and
sister Mary secretly, sa
Master is come, and
thee.
29 She, as soon as



heard this, riseth quickly, and cometh to Him.

30 For Jesus was not yet come into the town; but He was still in that place where Martha had met Him.

31 The Jews, therefore, who were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up speedily and went out, followed her, saying: She goeth to the grave, to weep there.

32 When Mary, therefore, was come where Jesus was, seeing Him, she fell down at His feet, and said to Him: Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

33 Jesus, therefore, when He saw her weeping, and the Je-

that were come with her, weeping, groaned in the spirit, and troubled Himself.

34 And said: Where have you laid him? They said to Him: Lord, come and see.

35 And Jesus wept.

36 The Jews, therefore, said: Behold how He loved him.

37 But some of them said: Could not He that opened the eyes of a man born blind, have caused that this man should not die?

38 Jesus, therefore, again groaning in Himself, cometh to the sepulchre. Now it was a cave, and a stone was laid over it.

39 Jesus saith: Take away the stone. Martha, the sister of him

that was dead, saith to Him: Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he is now of four days.

40 Jesus said to her: Did not I say to thee, that if thou wilt believe, thou shalt see the glory of God?

41 They therefore took the stone away. And Jesus, lifting up His eyes, said: Father, I give Thee thanks that Thou hast heard me.

42 And I knew that Thou hearest Me always, but because of the people who stand about have I said it; that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me.

43 When He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice: Lazarus, come forth.

44 And presently he that had

been dead came forth, bound feet and hands with winding-bands, and his face was bound about by a napkin. Jesus said to them: Loose him, and let him go.

I know not what others may think, but for myself, were there but this one page in the Gospel, I should believe in the Divinity of Christ. 'Tis in vain that I recall all else that I have read; I know of nothing that bears such a deep and striking impress of truth. No single word but carries with it the conviction that none but a God could thus act and thus dictate. As a scene of Friendship, it stands unequalled in every age and in every tongue. The narrative overflows with a tenderness, less ex-

pressed than understood, but present throughout, and reaching its utmost depth in that single word, "*And Jesus wept.*" He wept not in the hour of His passion; He wept not at receiving from the lips of an apostle the traitor's kiss, nor when S. Peter denied Him through fear of a woman; nor did He weep at beholding at the foot of His cross His mother and His dearest friends. That was the supernatural hour of our redemption, and the Divinity of the Just One, who purchased us by His agony, was to be made manifest in strength and majesty. But, on the very eve of that hour when the Christ, still free, shared our human life, He could not refuse, at the tomb of

His friend, this tribute of human love. He trembled, and grew troubled, and then, like one of us, He groaned and wept. Holy sorrow! Happy grief! Precious tears, that proved to us that our God felt as we feel, and that He allows us tears of joy and sorrow!

We see that our Lord had at Bethany a family of friends; it was there, on His return from Jerusalem, the scene of His coming sacrifice, that He took rest from the labours of His preaching, and the sad foresight of His approaching hour.

Under that roof there awaited Him the pure and devoted love of friends, the incomparable treasure of a tried affection. From Bethany



out on His triumphal entry
erusalem. Within sight of
ny, His face turned thither-
, He ascended into heaven,
st midway between the Cal-
where He died, and the dwell-
where they had loved Him the
t. At the present day, when
traveller leaves Jerusalem and
passed over Kedron and climb-
Mount Olivet, he discerns on
eastern declivity of those hills
ew ruined houses scattered here
d there. Three spots, scarce-
discernible among the ruins,
pointed out to the traveller
the dwellings of Lazarus,
rtha, and Mary Magdalen.
mory has proved herself fa-
onger than the ravages

barbarism; and the name of the friends of our Lord, surviving the scattered ruins, still re-echoes in these solitudes. Opposite to him, but from the same spot, the traveller gazes on Jerusalem, basking in the rays of the setting sun, sad and pensive, having for its sole glory a tomb. But this tomb—the sepulchre of her God! Both thought and eye wander from one to the other of these spots, marked by a desolation so dissimilar. Here, nought but a name; there, a city, but what a city! Our Lord would not that the tomb and the dwelling of His chosen friends should be there. He bore all away at His ascension, and transplanting Beth-

any beyond the seas, He prepared for those who loved Him, an immortal welcome on shores for ever Christian.

If, in thought, restoring these vanished dwellings, we reverently enter with the Master, and seat ourselves at the evening meal with Jesus, Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, we shall perhaps question which among these cherished hosts is dearest to the heart of Jesus. For, in predilection there is a still further predilection, so deep and sacred and mysterious a thing is love. Can we fathom this mystery? May we enter, aided by the Gospel, and exercise a curiosity free from blame? I think we may, for we *cannot know* oo exactly where to

find the Master's heart, in order that we may know, after Him and with Him, whom best to love. If the Christian loves to trace, even in the very dust, the footsteps of the Saviour, how much more shall we not seek the trace of His affections in the pages of the Gospel! Here, then, shall my search be. I travel, in thought, to Bethany, I cross the threshold, I listen and I look, and reply to my own question, "Who was most dearly loved?"

Was it Lazarus? There is but this one word said of him, and in which his sisters share, *Jesus loved Lazarus*, and this other, *Lazarus our friend sleeps;* and yet one more, and this the last, *Lazarus*, "*come forth.*"



Martha, she is the first to
hat Jesus is come, and to
th to meet Him, as she is
t to say, "*Lord, if Thou*
een here, my brother had not
but when the Saviour re-
"*Thy brother shall rise*
no light enables her to
te the meaning of the Son
—her faith is halting, and
as to say to her, "*I am the*
ction and the Life; believest
is?" Then, again, in spite
reiterated assertions, when
rd commands the stone of
ulchre to be removed, she
refrain from remarking that
s has been dead four days,
r Lord is compelled to ad-
r thus reproachfully, "Said

I not, that if thou wilt believe, thou *shalt see the glory of God?*"

Mary is less impulsive than is Martha—she does not at first know that Jesus is there, but remains sitting in the house until Martha returns, and whispers to her, "*The Master is come, and calleth for thee.*" It is Jesus who calls for Mary, and desires that she shall witness what He is about to do. And Mary, so soon as she hears of the Master's coming, runs and falls at His feet. Martha stood, but Mary throws herself at the feet of Him whom she loves. Her words are those of her sister, "*Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.*" But Jesus makes no reply, and demands from her no

act of faith. He *knows* that *she* believes; the sight of her tears overcomes Him, and He weeps—till now He had refrained, but in Mary's presence His strength gives way—He shudders—He is troubled: "*And Jesus wept.*" We see that Mary possessed a deeper humility, a livelier faith, and a greater influence over the heart of Jesus. She was loved with a preference revealed in her virtues, since they were at once the effect and the cause of the love of the Son of God. This is confirmed in a remarkable passage in the Gospel of S. Luke, in his 10th chapter:

38 Now it came to pass as they went, that He entered into a certain town, and a certain woman,

named Martha, received Him into her house.

39 And she had a sister called Mary, who, sitting also at the Lord's feet, heard His word.

40 But Martha was busy about much serving; who stood and said: Lord, hast Thou no care that my sister hath left me alone to serve? Speak to her, therefore, that she help me.

41 And the Lord, answering, said to her: Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and art troubled about many things.

42 But one thing is necessary. Mary hath chosen the best part, that shall not be taken away from her.

What was this "better part," if not a greater love on the side of

our Saviour, merited by her perfect love? Martha served, Mary listened and meditated. Martha stood, Mary sat at the feet of the Saviour. Martha complained, Mary was silent. Between these two affections, so differently expressed, hesitation is not possible; and in declaring that of Mary preferable, Jesus gave it the preference, and promised to it the better part that should never be taken away.

Who, then, was this Mary, who, in her deep love of Christ, had renounced all save love and contemplation? S. John is careful to teach us this in the very second sentence of his narrative. Scarcely *has he named* Mary, than he stops

to tell us, *It was that Mary who anointed the Saviour with perfume, and wiped His feet with her hair.* The apostle evidently considers it important that we should know this, and know it by an action which renders it impossible for us to confuse her with any other woman in the Gospel.

If another had also *anointed His feet and wiped them with her hair*, this action, ceasing its application to a single personage, would no longer clearly mark her out as Mary of Bethany. Now, S. John intended to designate her clearly, and, to do so, named an action which distinguished her from all others, inasmuch as the act was startling, unique, and sublime in

lowed Jesus, and ministered to Him; many cherished Him with a love worthy of the Son of Man and the Son of God—worthy of the Son of Man by the chaste adoration of a supernatural tenderness, and worthy of the Son of Man by the care which they lavished on that human nature which He had assumed for us. But one alone was moved to anoint His feet with ointment, and wipe them with her hair. This last circumstance reveals the action of one single soul. There are things which may be repeated by the soul who has conceived them, but which can be *imitated by none.* Twice did a

woman throw herself at the Saviour's feet; twice did a woman pour on them a perfume of great price, and wipe them with her hair; but even if the Gospel did not insinuate it, and were tradition silent, we should be certain that but one impulse, but one mind was here, and that if the unction was a twofold one, there was one heart only that conceived it, one hand that performed it, as there was but one God to be the recipient.

Such was the belief from the earliest ages downward.[1] Mary of Bethany, sister of Lazarus and Martha, is the only woman who

[1] Proofs of this are found in M. l'Abbé Faillon's celebrated work, *Monuments inédits sur l'apostolat de Ste. Marie-Magdaleine en Provence.*



twice anointed the Saviour's feet with perfume, and wiped them with her hair. At the second anointing, which took place three days before the death of the Son of God, the Evangelist mentions her by her name, and by the place where the scene took place; in the first, which heralds the commencement of the public ministry of our Lord, Mary is not named. We are going to see why this was so; how this silence was repaired I have already related.

CHAPTER III.

Of the First Anointing of Jesus by Mary of Bethany, otherwise Mary Magdalen.

JESUS CHRIST had begun His public ministry; it was to last but a short time, and around Him, from its first moments, we see grouped three kinds of persons: first, mere disciples, men converted by His word, and regarding and treating Him as the Saviour of the world; then, from among these we behold twelve apostles, chosen to be the foundation of that spiritual society of which their Master was to be the life; and among these apostles and these disciples, some few souls

predestined to be the friends and consolers of the God made man. All, doubtless, bound to Him by the ties of love; all, save the traitor and a few deserters, loving Him with a sincere love, returned by Christ, and which, greater for His apostles, enabled Him to say, *I have called you my friends.* But it is clear, in reading the Gospel narrative, that the apostles, elected though they were, and holding the first place in the work of redemption, were not dearest to the heart that had called them. Jesus, image of our life, as He willed to have a mother, willed also to have friends, —who were so, not in virtue of the office they held, but in virtue of a beneficence spontaneous in its action.

S. John was one of those, and in his Gospel distinguishes himself from others by these words, so full of grace and simplicity, *The disciple whom Jesus loved.*

We do not find in the Gospel the first causes of this predilection for S. John. He was a son of a Galilee fisherman, and had a brother named James. One day, while mending their nets in their boat, Jesus saw and called them. *At once,* says the Gospel, *they left their nets and followed Him.*[1] This is all we know of the origin of a friendship, which made of the fisherman John, an apostle, evangelist, a martyr, and the last of the prophets. It was not thus with

[1] S. Matt., chap. iv. ver. 20.

Mary, sister of Lazarus and Martha. Here is the scene in which she appears for the first time, at the feet of Him who was to make of her the most illustrious of women, one alone excepted.

The narrative is S. Luke's, in his 7th chapter:

36 And one of the Pharisees desired Him to eat with him. And He went into the house of the Pharisee, and sat down to meat.

37 And, behold, a woman that was in the city, a sinner, when she knew that He sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment;

38 And standing behind, at His feet, she began to wash them with *the hairs of* her head, and kissed



His feet, and anointed them with ointment.

39 And the Pharisee who had invited Him, seeing it, spoke within himself, saying: This man, if he were a prophet, would surely know who and what manner of woman is this that toucheth him, that she is a sinner.

40 And Jesus, answering, said to him: Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee. But he said: Master, say it.

41 A certain creditor had two debtors; the one owed him five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

42 And whereas they had not wherewith to pay, he forgave them both. Which, therefore, of the two loveth him most?



43 Simon, answering, said: I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And He said to him: Thou hast judged rightly.

44 And, turning to the woman, He said unto Simon: Dost thou see this woman? I entered into thy house; thou gavest Me no water for My feet; but she with tears hath washed My feet, and with her hairs hath wiped them.

45 Thou gavest Me no kiss; but she, since she came in, hath not ceased to kiss My feet.

46 My head with oil thou didst not anoint, but she with ointment hath anointed My feet.

47 Therefore, I say to thee: Many sins are forgiven her, be*cause she hath* loved much. Be

) whom less is forgiven, he loveth
ss.

48 And He said to the woman :
hy sins are forgiven thee.

49 And they that sat at meat
ith Him began to say within
iemselves : Who is this that for-
iveth sins also ?

50 And He said to the woman :
hy faith hath made thee safe ; go
i peace.

Few pages of the Gospel are so
)uching to the human heart as this
ne, and doubtless no other friend-
iip ever began like this. From
ie abyss of the deepest abjection
ito which her sex can fall, a wo-
ian lifts her eyes to Divine Purity,
id despairs not of regaining the
eauty of her soul. Whilst yet a

sinner, she has recognised God incarnate, and, overwhelmed by her shame, conceives the idea of entering His presence. She takes a box of alabaster (the symbol of light), containing a precious perfume. It may be that this very vase had ministered to her sinful charms. She had profaned all, and could but offer God the wreck; so she enters in silence, and she will depart in silence. Penitent, she will not accuse herself in the presence of Him who knows all; pardoned, she will express no grateful word. The mystery is transacted in her heart, and her silence, which is her act of faith and humility, is also *the supreme* effort of a soul full *overflowing*, and powerless.

voluptuous East, anointing the head was a mark of respect. Mary knew this better than others, and often in the days that had gone, had she bestowed this honour on those whom she had enslaved by her beauty; therefore she approaches, not the sacred head of our Lord, but, as a servant, whose duty it is to perform the most menial offices, she bends over His feet, and, without at first touching them, washes them with her tears. Never since creation's dawn, had such tears fallen on human feet. Adoration may have been yielded them through fear or love; they may have been laved in perfumed waters, for in primitive ages kings' daughters disdained not to render

this homage to the stranger, but never before had penitence seated herself in silence at the feet of man, and watered them with tears meet to ransom a life!

Weeping, and neither expecting nor receiving a single word of encouragement, Mary unlooses her magnificent tresses, and, making them minister to her penitence, wipes with those silky and humbled locks the feet she has bathed with her tears. Never before had a woman's tresses been condemned, or rather, should we say, consecrated, to such a ministry of tenderness and expiation. Some have cut off their hair, as a sign of mourning; others have offered it *at the* shrine of a god; but history,

that has recorded the most unique actions of man, nowhere shows us penitence and sin creating at once such a touching image of themselves. The sight has struck the disciple of love, initiated though he was in the deep mystery of self-sacrifice, and, desiring to transmit to future ages the portraiture of Mary, he could find no better way of depicting her, than to say: "*It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with perfume, and wiped His feet with her hair.*"

This act accomplished, the sinner gains courage; she touches, with her desecrated lips, the Saviour's feet, and covers them with kisses which efface the print of all those which she has ever given or re-

ceived. At the touch of that flesh, more than virginal in its purity, the last traces of the past vanish; the ingrained stains disappear, and those transfigured lips exhale henceforth but the living breath of purity. Only now, in order to consummate her penitence by love, she opens the box of alabaster, its sweet odours a type of immortality, pours it on the Saviour's feet, all covered as they are with her kisses and her tears. Her purified hands no longer fear to touch and anoint the Son of God, and the house is filled with the virtue that is exhaled from the fragile vase and from the immortal one, from the alabaster and from the heart!

Who would have believed it? Man cannot comprehend the sight, nor can he understand the penitence and the expiation, the pardon and the love; his sole thought is a doubt as to the Divinity of Him who has here given such a clear manifestation of His presence.

It is at this moment that the sublime dialogue between Jesus Christ and the Pharisee begins, and opens with those words: *Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee;* and which ends with these: *Many sins are forgiven her, for she hath loved much.* Ah! not in vain has posterity listened to these words. Not in vain have such scenes and such accents shed light on our

poor human nature. No! chaste tears of the converted sinner, tresses falling on the Saviour's feet, sweet and bitter tears of penitence, perfume poured forth on the spotless flesh of the incarnate Friend, ye have not been shed in vain! Generations have followed in the track of this ineffable communion between justice and the sinner, between eternal life and eternal death. Other Maries have arisen from the couch of sin, and from age to age have approached the feet of the Saviour, yet wet with tears. There, too, have they wept, and with their tresses wiped away their tears—there have they imprinted chaste *kisses, whose chastity* was won by

remorse, and there have they poured forth the perfume from the depths of the vase filled by the first Mary. The world, enemy though it is to all purity that withstands it, has been unable to refuse its admiration to a purity that, phœnix-like, revives from its ashes; and, blind though it is, the world has understood why Jesus, willing to choose for Himself earthly friends, called to Himself the sinner, after electing John the saint; and the world forgives Him who pronounced over a lost woman this wondrous absolution: *Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much.* O my God, Thou art God indeed! Thy words alone have created virtues, and Thy

friendship for a sinner has created saints.

Such was the first anointing of Jesus by Mary of Bethany. It probably took place at Bethany, for the Evangelist S. Luke, who is the only narrator of the event, says expressly that it occurred in the house and at the table of a Pharisee named Simon. According to S. Matthew and S. Mark, the second anointing, of which we shall soon speak, took place at Bethany, in the house and at the table of Simon the leper, and S. John adds that Lazarus was among the guests, and that Martha served. The similarity of name between Simon the Pharisee and Simon the *leper, in two facts* which, though

analogous, differ in time and circumstance, renders it probable that both anointings occurred at the house of Simon, neighbour to Lazarus and Martha, and therefore at Bethany. At the time of the first anointing, Mary was still a sinner, and her conversion it was that gave rise to the intimate friendship between Jesus and the family of Lazarus. Thenceforth Bethany became to Jesus an abode of love and peace, the only spot, as we infer from His frequent returns there, for which He evinced any predilection.

I have given to the sister of Lazarus and Martha, to the friend of Christ, the name of Mary of Bethany. Nowhere is she so named in

the Gospel, and S. John, in his two celebrated chapters on the resurrection of Lazarus, and the last anointing, only alludes to her by her relationship to Lazarus and to Martha. She is invariably, Mary their sister. Elsewhere she disappears. Nowhere else do we find her mentioned by her family name; neither at the cross, nor at the sepulchre, nor at the resurrection. This woman, but now so celebrated, whom you will see anointing the Saviour again on the eve of His passion, and of whom Jesus will say, to compensate for the envy of which she is the victim: "*Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also which she hath done, shall*

be told for a memory of her"[1]— this woman vanishes. Two days before His passion, Jesus said of her, and of the precious perfumes with which she had just anointed Him, "*Let her alone, that she may keep it against the day of My burial.*"[2]

But on that day of sepulture the sister of Lazarus and Martha is not to be seen. At Bethany, she is all; out of Bethany, she is nothing. This would be impossible, for Mary of Bethany has a name which is to be for ever renowned, a name scattered throughout the pages of the Gospel, and if, in the events at Bethany, she is

[1] S. Matt., chap. xxvi. ver. 13.
[2] S. John, chap. xii. ver. 7.

nameless, it is because the spot itself designates her in the dearest manner.

The Gospel knows but two Maries, besides Mary the Mother of God. Mary Magdalen, out of whom S. Luke says the Saviour *chased seven devils*,[1] and Mary, sister of the Blessed Virgin, and sometimes called after her husband, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary mother of James and of Joseph. This is why S. Matthew, speaking of the women present at the entombment of our Lord, says, as a thing so simple, that none can misunderstand: *There was Mary Magdalen and the other Mary;*[2]

[1] S. Luke, chap. viii. ver. 2.
[2] S. Matt., chap. xxvii. ver. 61

d later on, on the morning of the surrection: "*Came Mary Magdalen and the other Mary to visit e sepulchre.*"[1] If, besides Mary agdalen and the other Mary, ter of the Blessed Virgin, there d been a third Mary, sister of zarus and Martha, it is clear at the language of the Evangelist uld have been inexact and incorrect. For him, as for the whole Christendom, there was, in our viour's history, and apart from is blessed mother, but two other aries — therefore, one of these, her Mary Magdalen or Mary of eophas, must have been Mary of thany. It was not Mary of eophas, sister of the Blessed

[1] S. Matt., chap. xxviii. ver. 1.

Virgin; therefore, it was Mary Magdalen.

This is affirmed by tradition, by the liturgy of the Church, and by the most ancient monuments raised to the memory of Mary Magdalen. Their language reveals to us the sinner weeping at the feet of Jesus —bathing them with her tears, and wiping them with her hair; the same who, as sister to Lazarus, was present at his resurrection, and was to be found standing at the foot of the cross of her Well-Beloved, following Him to the tomb, and meriting to be the first witness of the splendours of His resurrection. All division of such glory is chimerical, contrary to Scripture, contrary to the tradition of ages,

contrary to the devotion of the faithful, and to the universal veneration which everywhere presents to our eyes and to our minds the one same woman, in whom are accomplished the most touching mysteries of penitence and love.

Mary was named Magdalen, from the town of Magdala on the shores of Lake Galilee, either because she was a native of that locality or had long resided there. It is certain that she had lived in Galilee, for S. Matthew and S. Mark expressly mention her as one of the women who followed Jesus from Galilee and ministered unto Him.[1] For this reason some

[1] S. Matt. chap. xxvii. vers. 35 and 36; S. Mark, chap. xv. vers. 40 and 41.



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CHAPTER IV.

The Second Anointing of Jes Mary Magdalen.

MEANWHILE the hour drew in which the Son of God w accomplish the redemption c world by the sacrifice of Hi and prove, by the test of sc the fidelity of those whon had chosen and favoured wit special love. Six days befor pasch which was to be th under the old, and the first c new covenant, He came to Bet and on that same day, on the His triumphal entry into Jerus they prepared for Him a s *in the* house of a person spc

by the Evangelist as Simon the leper. Lazarus was among the guests, and Martha, with her wonted activity, was zealous in serving them. This was not that last supernatural supper which was to precede the death of the Saviour, and by the institution of the Holy Eucharist was to open to the world new sources of grace. This was the meeting of friends, the last repast on the eve of the great week of the passion. Christ had but six more days of mortal life, and in a few hours He must enter as king into that city where He would shortly expire as its God. S. John has, in a special manner, noticed this moment's rest in *Bethany*, ere the Son of Man



began to tread the way to Calvary. "*Jesus, therefore, six days before the pasch, came to Bethania, where Lazarus had been dead, whom Jesus raised to life, and they made Him a supper there; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of them that were at table with Him.*"[1]

As our Lord, the true Pasch, died on Friday a little before the last hour of day, we conclude that the supper at Bethany took place on the Sabbath evening, not at the house of Lazarus or his sisters, but in that of Simon the leper. This selection, at such a moment, proves Simon to be no stranger, either to Jesus or to the family of Lazarus, and confirms us in the belief that

[1] Chap. xii. vers. 1 and 2.

Magdalen.

The latter is not named as being among either guests or servers. Her tenderness, suffused with new light, reveals to her that this repast has about it the nature of a farewell, and that the end is near. She, therefore, takes now, as at the first time, an alabaster box, filled with precious perfume, which S. John calls nard, and enters the supper-room. She is no longer that woman in whom the marks of vice were but ill disguised by youth and beauty, and who timidly drew near the feet of Jesus, to *wash them with* her tears. Three

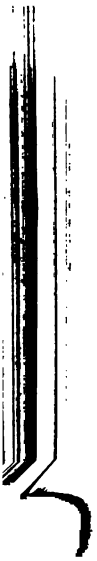
years of grace had passed over her brow, and sanctity had enveloped her with a divine halo. She enters, breaks the alabaster, and pours its perfume on her Saviour's head. She breaks the alabaster because she knows that all is consummated, and that never more shall the Saviour receive from human hands a similar homage. This act of despair and prophetic love accomplished, Mary remembers her former baseness, and, running to the feet of Jesus, pours on them the remnant of the perfume, and wipes them with her tresses. But the Gospel names no tears. Once more shall she shed them, but at another time and another place. *Now* strength and composure are

needed; it is no longer the hour of pardon, nor yet the hour of the tomb.

Oh, pitifulness of human nature! It is no longer the Pharisee who doubts the Divinity of his God because he sees Him touched by a sinner; it is the disciples themselves who murmur on seeing the precious perfume poured on the Saviour's head—that head which, so soon, they will behold crowned with thorns. *Why was this waste of the ointment made? It might have been sold for more than* 300 *pence and given to the poor.*[1] We see here the weakness of the human mind to fathom the mysteries of God. Jesus is not offended at their want

[1] *S. Mark, chap.* xiv. vers. 4 and 5.

victory over the world, and life had conquered death, it is not to His Mother that Jesus first appears, nor yet to S. Peter; neither is it to S. John, the much-loved disciple; but to Mary Magdalen, the converted sinner, the impersonation of sin transformed by penitence into love. The Saviour had already uttered those words: *There is more joy in heaven over one sinner that doth penance than over ninety-nine just who need not penance.* Surely it was a sublime rendering of these words, when our Lord vouchsafed to Mary Magdalen the privilege of being the first to behold the Son of God risen from His tomb, Vanquisher of *sin and* Satan, of the world and of



been the depths of the love tha
merited such a recompense! An
with what love must such recom
pense have been received! Th
heart and mind of man canno
fathom such an abyss; and thoug
I can but faintly perceive or com
prehend it, I can at least yield t
the fulness of emotion alway
awakened within me when I rea
these words of the Evangelist: *H*
appeared first to Mary Magdalen.
There is on Magdalen's brow
glory which fades not, and whic
through endless ages will gladde

[1] *S. Mark*, chap. xvi. ver. 9

all those who, in this divinely-illumined soul, seek to know more of God's dealings with His own.

He appeared, then, first to Mary Magdalen, and though we cannot penetrate the mystery of all that passed in these two hearts—one, the heart of a God bestowing on His dearest earthly friend these first moments of His resurrection life; the other, the heart of the being who received this mark of unheard-of predilection—we may at least follow the Gospel narrative with admiring love, and seek to know, as far as our imperfect nature admits, the joy that is permitted to us on earth.

Until now, no word has been addressed directly to Mary, for when

At that moment, in the morrow of the acclamations of Jerusalem and two days after the happy hour at Bethany, the cross was but an instrument of terror, a painful and opprobrious punishment. It alarmed the world, and its destiny was to console it; it was a cursed thing, and yet it was to become a source of blessing. But as yet this transfiguration had not occurred, and the cross of Calvary, the cross of the Son of Man, still possessed all its horror and all its nakedness. Let us gaze there, and see whom we shall find faithful at this meeting-place of heaven and *of earth.*

God is not there, for the Son mourns that His Father has forsaken Him; neither is the angel of the Garden of Olives there; and when "*I thirst*" issues from the lips of the Crucified, no angel-hand presents to Him the cup. Heaven still hides her face. The air is calm, the sun shines in orient splendour; Mount Zion groans not; all is quiet within the temple, and the veil that guards the Holy of Holies stirs not. This is the world's hour, and the world is there. Behold the executioners, who have finished their work and are resting; at their side are the Pharisees, who have not yet completed theirs, and who insultingly look at Him who unmasked their

pretended virtues; a little apart is the Roman guard, and the centurion in charge, with fixed gaze, and heart agitated by a presentiment which overwhelms, without as yet, enlightening him. Then there are the passers-by, who shake the head, and, without farther disquieting themselves, say gaily, "*Vah, thou that destroyest the temple of God, and in three days dost rebuild it: save thy own self.*"[1]

Everywhere there reigns abandonment, silence, outrage, and blasphemy; and yet this is the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, the King of ages, the heir of all that He has made, He before whom every knee shall bow, of things in

[1] *S. Matt.*, chap. xxvii. ver. 40.

heaven, earth, and hell! Ah! are none of His own there? Will none of the living or the dead come to own and to salute Him in this moment of His Divine misery?

Oh no! all are not absent. If, by the decree of His wisdom and justice, God is not there; if, by another decree, He has struck with terror the greater number of those who have loved His Son, there is still one group at the foot of His cross, and His eyes, looking down, can discern His Mother, Mary of Cleophas, His Mother's sister, Salome, mother of Zebedee's children, Mary Magdalen, the apostle S. John, and a few faithful women who are nameless, but who were wont to follow and to minister

unto Him. All the love that the world contained was there at the foot of the cross, and it was sufficient. Enough that the Saviour there recognised all who had loved Him before His advent, and all those who would love Him after. He beheld in His Mother, the Virgin *par excellence*, the whole quire of virgins; in Mary of Cleophas, and in Salome, the quire of mother and Christian spouses; in S. Joh the representative of apostle martyrs, prophets, and of you men vowed to chastity, and others, drinking in at the bosor the faith, strength to maintain dignity of their calling; and He saw in Mary Magdaler *countless* and sacred crov

converted sinners, clothed by penitence with the nuptial robe dyed in the blood of the Lamb.

In sight of this little flock, *pusillus grex*, as our Lord named the ocean of His elect, the Saviour is silent for all, save for His mother and S. John. To the former He said: *Woman, behold thy son;* to S. John: *Behold thy mother.* These were the only utterances from the cross relating to earthly affection; all other words related to things eternal. Mary Magdalen was not singled out from the rest; the passion was not to be the scene of her triumph. Jesus Christ awaits her on another spot, in a sweeter moment, where, setting *the seal to* her election, He reserves

them. S. Peter dies in Rome, sharing his Master's cross; all the apostles are martyrs for the faith. S. John is no exception, for, by his endurance of the excruciating torment before the Latin Gate, he has won the crown of the martyr in will. Our Lord watches over him with especial tenderness, and after his miraculous escape from death, and from the hands of a cruel tyrant, S. John's prolonged life renders him an object of special interest to the whole Church, and enables him to render to the Divinity of Jesus a testimony far stronger than that of any other of the Evangelists. Also, by a privi-*lege* granted to him alone, he see*s* *the prophetic* vision of the Ch

future, and records the revelation in words destined to enlighten and console the faithful, even to the very end of time. Then he dies, full of peace, and reiterating to his disciples these words of his Master, "*Little children, love one another.*"

The Mother of our Lord does not long survive the resurrection and ascension of her Son; and, aspiring to Him by an emotion that sets her soul free from all other ties, she ascends from her tomb to that throne where she shall ever reign as queen of angels, and queen of those saved by her Son. The martyr's death awaits not Mary Magdalen—she, as the *Blessed* Virgin and S. John, is to

lead a quiet life of love; she will live the same life at the feet of her ascended Lord that she led at Bethany and Calvary, as one versed in the joys of contemplation, and needing but to gaze within her heart to behold Him whom she had formerly beheld veiled in mortal flesh. Where, then, is the quiet spot prepared for her? Where shall she end her hallowed days? Is it the Eastern desert, the banks of Jordan, Mount Zion, or the roof at Nazareth or Bethlehem that shall be last witnesses of her boundless love? Jesus bequeathed His Mother to Jerusalem, S. Peter to Rome, S. John to Asia, but to whom is *Mary Magdal*en bequeathed?

We know to whom. It is France that received from the hands of God this legacy of His Son. Tradition, with history and her monuments, tell us this, and Providence has set the seal to their testimony. One cannot tread the soil of Provence without meeting at each step with some memory of Mary Magdalen. She is everywhere present. Not united to it by some faint link, but by one, the strongest of all to a Christian people, the great fact of their conversion. Such an event, with all its attendant circumstances, is ever graved indelibly on a nation's mind, and the cherished memory of its first apostles—their hallowed tombs, their names invoked in prayer,

churches erected in their honour—put to flight the vain reasonings of men. Before the dawn of Christianity, Provence was no barbarous country, but for more than a century had been a Roman province, and had received from the hands of her conquerors all the culture of Greece and of Rome. Marseilles was the link connecting her with the shores of the Mediterranean, and an unceasing traffic laid at her feet the tribute of far distant lands, so that when the first sound of the Gospel fell on her listening ears, no doubt was possible in her mind regarding those who brought her from the East that wondrous revelation. She knew them, con*versed intim*ately with them, and,

owing to them her conversion to the new faith, for ever held their names in highest reverence. There can be no doubt of this, for has not a nation, specially in all that concerns its faith, a more trustworthy memory than have individuals, a memory which age, far from impairing, serves but to renew? That which is graven by religion on the altar, and in the heart by prayer, outlives monuments of brass and marble, and those kings who survive only in the pages of history, have a less during record than apostles possess in a nation's heart!

To whom, then, does Provence ascribe her faith? To whom, after *the lapse* of nineteen centuries, is

she indebted for the light which, at the Gospel dawn, chased away the profound darkness enveloping the human race? This debt she owes to the illustrious family of Bethany, who had Jesus for their friend and guest. To Lazarus, to Martha, to Mary Magdalen, to Trophimus, and to Maximin, she is indebted for this priceless gift. These are cherished names that a grateful posterity has transmitted to its children. Marseilles claims Lazarus as her first bishop; Aix claims S. Maximin; Arles, S. Trophimus; Avignon and Tarascon hail S. Martha as the apostle who delivered them from error; and S. Mary Magdalen, though one *with these*, yet excelling them

all, reigns throughout the whole Church of Provence, as sovereign of the apostolate who founded it.

The monuments existing in Provence re-echo the voice of ages. In vain has the barbarian swept over that land, in vain has the Saracen marked it with his devastations; this twofold invasion was powerless to destroy those monuments which races and Providence have destined to perpetuate to future generations the memory of the saintly founders of the Church in Provence. Marseilles still sees, beneath the ancient abbey of S. Victor, the crypt where S. Lazarus gathered around him his first converts, and where the body of its first bishop *reposed* until the day when, to save

it from the hands of the infidel, it was translated to the church of Autun. Tarascon venerates the tomb which enclosed, and still encloses, the relics of S. Martha, and the very marble, stronger than time, shows to the pilgrim the striking scene of the resurrectio of Lazarus. Two other tomb still more celebrated, and reunit in the same crypt by the hand fraternal piety, inform the trav that S. Magdalen was placed t opposite the spot where S. min is buried, and the very given to the scene of this sepulture, that of S. M testifies to the undying in graven on the nation's *was there* S. Magdalen

pilgrimage, and on that spot S. Maximin enshrined her in a tomb of alabaster, in memory of that other alabaster which twice served to guard the perfume with which she anointed her Lord. There S. Maximin desired to be buried, side by side with those remains so dear to his own heart, so dear to Jesus, to angels, and to men, and where a veneration of nearly 2000 years still lays its tribute at her shrine. The tomb of S. Maximin represents the apostolic mission entrusted to him by Jesus Christ; that of S. Magdalen, the different traits in the life of the Son of God; and on a frieze, more than mutilated by the hands of the faithful, was to be seen formerly, so asserts the most

ancient and trustworthy testimony, the anointing of Jesus by the Magdalen.

All these tombs, linked together by the divine relationship of time, of friendship, and of sanctity, bear the impress of the early ages of Christianity. They are in th Roman style, and adorned with th strange mixture of Christian su jects and idolatrous emblems th so familiar. No archæologist is struck by their appearance, the admissions of the least c lous but confirm the vene with which these ancient and ful witnesses are regarded.

These are not the sole w The liturgy of numberless *agrees* with them and w

tion ; and history herself, strengthening tradition, monuments, and liturgies, has set the seal to the testimony of ages.

For some long time it was supposed that no writer of antiquity had recorded the life of S. Magdalen or enshrined her in the page of history, though she lived in the memory of nations, in marble monuments, in the feasts and lessons of the Church ; in spite of all this it was supposed that history was silent. Men inquired for some written record, although as early as the eleventh or twelfth century, there existed in European libraries some traces of a biography consecrated to the memory of a woman so powerful to attract the heart,

and inspire the genius of a saint. Providence watched over this precious record, and in the celebrated University of Oxford, in one of its colleges still dedicated to S. Mary Magdalen, pious hands have discovered a manuscript bearing the name of Raban-Maur (Archbishop of Mayence, at the beginning of the ninth century), and containing the lives of S. Martha and S. Mary Magdalen. The authenticity of the manuscript has been proved, also its antiquity and its completeness.

We shall not enter into particulars which can be found elsewhere,[1]

[1] See the already-named book of M. l'Ab *Faillon, Monuments Inédits*, &c.

but shall content ourselves with saying that Raban-Maur, on account of his learning, piety, influence, renown, and office, was one of the most eminent and noted men of the ninth century. Abbot of Fulda during twenty years, he resigned his charge and withdrew into profound retirement, from which, in spite of his reluctance, he was called to the archbishopric of Mayence, and has won for himself the name of a most faithful and exact historian. His biography of S. Martha and S. Mary Magdalen is simple; he follows the Gospel step by step, and when the ascension of our Lord closes the Gospel record, Raban-Maur has recourse to manuscripts which he asserts

to be extremely ancient, and these he has made the groundwork of his narrative.

These ancient manuscripts have come to light in the public libraries of Paris; and are the more precious, inasmuch as, in collating them with the history of Raban-Maur, we find them almost word for word alike.

The Archbishop of Mayence alludes to them as very ancient, even in his day, and their simplicity and brevity testify to this. They are supposed to belong to the fifth or sixth century, an epoch when the monuments of the apostolate of S. Magdalen and her companions were yet new, and the *land,* unravaged by the Saracens.

red greater facility to the his-
ian.

n this manner, time has but
ghtened the glory of the saint,
l what it has done for Holy
it, which the lapse of ages has
; confirmed, it has done for S.
ry Magdalen. A deeper know-
ge has clothed tradition with
righter light, and we can now
:k the footsteps of our loved
l illustrious saint through the
oured land of Provence.

CHAPTER VII.

S. Mary Magdalen at the Sainte-Baume, and at S. Maximin.

THE persecution of Christianity began in the very person of our Lord, and even surrounded His tomb. S. Stephen was its second victim, and its ravages soon extended as far as the walls of Damascus, where he who was to be known as Paul the saint, attacked the faith for which at a future day he would lay down his life. Blood calls for blood, and the thirst for it is only appeased when its waves reach the very lips of those who shed it. Christianity was baptized *with the* same baptism as her

Lord, and the first disciples, scattered through the world, bore with them the word which should illumine, and the blood that should cleanse. This was the second despersion of the human race. From the first, sprang nations; from the second, the Church. Any ordinary witness of the departure of these simple disciples leaving Jerusalem, and turning their steps towards all points of the horizon, would have doubtless taken them but for ordinary travellers. God alone understood His own mysterious purpose, and the difference between this departure, and that from the city of Babel.

A bark, one of many, quits the lovely shores that extend from

Mount Carmel to the mouths o
the Nile, and bears as its freight
the family of Bethany, and a fe
disciples. The same hand tha
guided the apostles, guided thes
also, and, following its Divine im
pulse, they arrive at a town whicl
at that time, was one of the chie
ports of Europe. Marseilles see
them disembark, all unconsciou
of the treasure which awaits he
He who might have spoken t
her of Lazarus, of Mary Magdalen
or of Martha, would have awak
ened no emotion in her heart
Earthly glory is not the garb o
Christianity. She wears no out
ward show, and even those wh
were to prepare for her scaffold
which should in their turn be suc

ıea by temples, as you
ed her name and her deeds.
r humility disguised her power,
. earth had no presentiment of
heaven that was in its midst.
olitary spots and subterranean
pts witnessed the celebration of
grand mysteries of redemption,
l from the blood of the cross,
ught hither by those who had
n it shed, there arose a little
ck; some few sailors, most likely,
d artisans, and poor women,

her first page in the book of life, to which she daily adds fresh names. We know not what part was assigned S. Mary Magdalen in her brother's mission, and the only souvenir of her at Marseilles is an altar dedicated in her honour, standing in the crypt of that ancient monument of the faith, the abbey of S. Victor.

The traces of the saint deepen when we arrive at Aix, and at the beginning of the present century, there existed in that city an oratory known as the spot where S. Mary Magdalen, and the favoured companion of her pilgrimage, S. Maximin, met for prayer. It bore the name of Saint-Sauveur, and its *position in* the lateral nave of the

hedral, of which it partly marred
architectural beauty, is a
werful testimony to the tradi-
n which pointed it out as the
dle from which the light of the
th radiated through Provence.
t it was neither Aix nor Mar-
lles that was chosen to be the
oured witness of S. Mary Mag-
len's realisation of the promise
her Lord. In the loneliness of
itude, by holy contemplation,
s she to enjoy that "*better*
rt, which should never be taken
ay."

God, in creation's hour, when
destined to each mountain,
in, and valley, its future inha-
ants, thought of Mary Mag-
en, and prepared for her a quiet

home. I have already described it, and have named the Sainte-Baume as a centre whither I invite all Christian hearts to come and rest awhile, and adore in silence the mysteries of Divine love. The same Divine grace that chose her led her to the foot of the cross, and granted her to be the first witness of the resurrection, drew her to this spot, even as it had drawn her to the Saviour's feet. In like manner were the deserts of the Thebaïd peopled—the same grace led S. Anthony to those wilds between the Nile and the Red Sea, where he became the founder of succeeding generations of hermits; and in this way, from *age to age* the saints have hallowed

distant lands, enriched them by their labours, and sowed the seed of Divine grace. Of this race of founders was Mary Magdalen, but, nearer than were they to the root which gave them birth, she brought to the heights of the Sainte-Baume a virtue unequalled, and a memory that is eternal!

The holy places are to the lower world what the stars are to the heavens, a source of light, of life, and of heat, and as well might man ask why God has set the polar star as a guide to the mariner, as to ask why He has marked certain earthly spots by a special consecration. Ah! would to God they were less rare, these shrines where love has dwelt! Would

that our hearts could more frequently find such hearths at which to bask! But if grace is as little lavish of her choicest gifts as is nature, let us at least seek and admire them.

S. Paul said: *I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I know not, or out of the body, I know not; God knoweth), such an one rapt even to the third heaven. And I know such a man, whether in the body, or out of the body, I know not; God knoweth; that he was caught up into paradise, and heard secret words which it is not granted to man to utter.*[1]

[1] Second Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. *xii. vers. 2, 3, 4.*

That which S. Paul dared not, no other may reveal; and yet his silence tells us much, and enables us to follow Mary Magdalen in her solitude, and witness without astonishment her miraculous contemplation. In that solitude, far from those who had crucified her Saviour and theirs, she had but one thought,—that of beholding again the Divine Friend whom she had lost. Neither separation or death has power to sever the ties of true love; the more you deny exit to the waters, the deeper runs the stream. And if we have seen mourners fading away at the tomb of their loved ones, what must have been the feelings of her who had embraced the feet of the Son

of God, and had loved Him with a love surpassing all earthly affection. Musing on this excess of love, I feel no surprise when tradition tells me that seven times daily she was borne from her grotto to the mountain summit, to listen there to words like those heard by S. Paul, and unutterable to mortal lips.

Holy ecstasy, incomprehensible to the natural man! Drawn down to earth by the weight of sin, he knows nothing of the power God has over a holy soul, or the influence such a soul has over the body; he believes in the attraction that draws world to world, but knows nought of the attractive power of God for the soul. We leave him *the science* that flatters his vanity.

l for ourselves, poor, simple
is of the Gospel, who have
tched our God yield His life
a sacrifice to love, and then,
mpted by the same Divine love,
scend to heaven in our behalf,
know Him to be our way, our
pe, and our life; and we yield
anks to God, who has given us
His saints, even here below,
amples of the ecstatic joy with
ich the beatific vision shall in-
date our souls.

The Sainte-Baume was to S.
ary Magdalen the Mount of
abor. Happier than S. Peter,
en he said to our Lord in the
ur of His transfiguration, *It is*
od for us to be here, let us make
ree tabernacles; to Mary Magdalen

was vouchsafed that dwelling refused to the prince of the apostles, and there she passed her solitary life in penance in the grotto, and in ecstasy on the mountain. As on Mount Thabor, so here, all remains the same: faith, the lowly worshipper at the shrine of memory, dwells on these two mountains, and from their spotless heights soars upwards to the God whose trace they bear.

For thirty years God vouchsafed to His angels this sublime spectacle, and to after generations its hallowed memories. Thirty years did Mary Magdalen pass in alternate penance and ecstasy, thus renewing her double life—that of *the penitent* sinner and that of

the friend of Jesus. Within the grotto, behind an ancient grille, is seen the rock which tradition asserts to be that whence ascended to heaven the prayers of the saint, and which is in a remarkable manner free from the humidity of the surrounding neighbourhood. Without the grotto, on the highest and most salient point of the mountain, and a little to the left, is the spot marked by tradition as that whither the Magdalen was each day borne in ecstatic reverie. A chapel hallows the spot, and attracts many pilgrims.

The hour at last drew nigh when S. Magdalen was to exchange the earthly moments of transient ecstasy for the endless bliss of

heaven. She knew it, and her last wish was to receive, under eucharistic veils, the Body and Blood of her Lord.

Leaning over the parapet of the terrace in front of the Sainte-Baume, you have at your back the mountain running from east to west, parallel with the Mediterranean; in face is another chain, less lofty and severe, seeming to commence near Marseilles, and terminating in an abrupt declivity not far from the Sainte-Baume, and bearing the name of S. Aurelian. Beyond, and, as it were, posted as vanguard, near the horizon rises the lofty and craggy summit of S. Victor, at the foot *of which* celebrated mountain the

Teutons and Cimbrians suffered defeat at the hands of Marius. This triple barrier offers but one opening, on the eastern side; and the eye of the spectator roams over a vast plain backed by the Alps, but having in the foreground another plain, small in extent and circular, lying at the base of Mount Aurelian, the Sainte-Baume, and S. Victoire. This is the plain of S. Maximin, placed, in strange contrast, between two most dissimilar historical sites, the one bearing the name of Mary Magdalen, the other that of Marius. On this spot S. Maximin erected his oratory, within view of S. Mary's distant retreat.

When the hour of her release



lian way crosses the roads
S. Maximin and the Sain
A column, named the S
reminds the traveller
memorable event, and c
mit is a representation o
derful transit. A few st
off was the modest ora
Maximin, near the towr
the itinerary of Antonin
Legulata. On this spot
awaited and welcomed
of his Divine Master;
hand she received the
Blood of her Lord, and
peacefully asleep. S.
laid her body in an alab

opposite the spot where he afterwards prepared his own place of sepulture, in face of the monument where he had enclosed those hallowed relics, which should henceforth confer on this secluded spot such immortal renown.

Such is the belief of the people of that land, and such the belief of the Church. Tradition, history, the language of the age, and the localities themselves, all tell the same tale, and bear glorious testimony to the miracles of God; and at this very tomb we shall behold a succession of events, which alone would testify that beneath that stone lay the special object of Divine predilection and love.

Every holy spot must have some

guard to preserve it from desecration and from oblivion; this is a law in the supernatural world. In the early days when persecution raged around the Church, she had but her crypts, her catacombs, and her tombs, and there she hid the blood shed by her martyrs, and kept secret watch over the mysterious treasure. A few rude inscriptions and drawings testify to the vigilant care of the faithful, and whilst the Cæsars, above ground, were immortalising their own deeds of shame, the Christians, in their subterranean retreats, were graving on lasting tablets the hidden virtues of their departed ones. At last the age dawned, when the shadows were dispersed, and Christ, risen

victorious from that second tomb, appeared to the gaze of the astonished world, surrounded by His saints. The crypts are opened, the catacombs are illumined, the tombs are changed into temples, and a guard far surer than that which guarded the threshold of the Capitol or Palatine, ranged itself around those fresh glories, to bear testimony to their origin, and give perpetuity to their memory. So was it with the Sainte-Baume, and the tomb of the holy Magdalen.

Early as the fourth century, the rule and renown of the hermits of the Thebaïd had already reached the shores of Gaul. S. Martin at Tours, S. Honorat in the Lérins isles, and the priest Cassian at

Marseilles, were the first to repro
duce among us the life of th
Eastern cenobites. Cassian, las
arrived of the three, had visite
the monasteries of Egypt, an
described in his celebrated writ
ings their institutions and thei
customs. Returning to Marseilles
his native place, he there founded
the abbey of S. Victor, over the
very crypts where S. Lazarus was
buried, and being a fervent lover
of that solitude of which he had
seen such marvellous results, he
hastened to find some retreat
whither he might at times escape
from the sound of waves and stir
of human life. The Sainte-Baume
had strong attractions for him,
and doubtless recalled to his me-

mory the Eastern solitudes he had so much admired. He went there with a few of his disciples, and thus formed the guard which, during the thousand years intervening between the fourth and thirteenth centuries, faithfully watched over those relics which Providence had entrusted to their care. Located both at the Sainte-Baume and at S. Maximin — the one the scene of ecstatic rapture, the other that of sepulture — the Cassianite monks proved themselves worthy guardians of that twofold monument of Divine grace.

At the present day is to be seen, a little below and eastward of the Sainte-Baume, a hermitage called *the Hermitage of Cassian*, and quite

near it is a fountain named after the saint. The mountain towering above this lonely spot also bears his name, and the shepherds tending their flocks on its rugged flanks know no other designation for the mountain, hermitage, and spring. They cannot tell you who Cassian was, but they repeat his name to the traveller, and echo, faithful to tradition, repeats it too.

At the commencement of the eighth century, the Saracens overran the land of Provence, and devastated it during 300 years. The Cassianites, trembling for the safety of the holy relics, buried the crypt containing them, beneath a mound of earth and sand, and in *this* manner unconsciously pre-

pared for the future identification of the holy relics. Not content with hiding the crypt, they went so far as to disturb its inner arrangements. The body of S. Magdalen had originally been placed at the far end of the crypt, on the left hand side, and laid in a tomb of alabaster, whilst that of S. Maximin was placed opposite to it, and on the right hand side. After a time a third and fourth tomb were added to these primitive ones.

Sidoin, Bishop of Aix, desiring to be laid at the side of the founder of his church, had been buried at the right hand side of the crypt. Opposite, and therefore to the left on entering, and on the same side

as that where rested the body of S. Mary Magdalen, was another tomb, containing relics said to be those of the *Holy Innocents*, either because they had been brought thither from Palestine, or else because they were the bodies of little children who had died soon after baptism. The Cassianites, in order the better to conceal the sacred treasure committed to their care, removed it from its celebrated tomb of alabaster into the tomb of S. Sidoin, already deprived of its relics, and they placed on it two inscriptions which should at some future day testify to the authenticity of the remains of S. Magdalen.

That day was then far distant

nearly six centuries passed away; the ravages of the Saracens lasted so long, that when they finally ceased, the spot where the saint's relics lay was no longer accurately remembered. It was known to be somewhere beneath the pavement of the basilica, but as yet no authorised hand attempted to discover it. This was permitted by God in order to render more striking the reappearance of those holy relics, and to give to the veneration paid the friend of His Divine Son a celebrity with which France, Europe, and Asia should resound.

It was the era of crusades, and ever since their commencement report had begun to draw attention to the abbey of Vezelay in

Burgundy. This abbey, founded in the ninth century by Gérard de Roussillon, count and governor of Provence, had for some time been devoid of celebrity, but, towards the end of the eleventh century, the report was spread that the body of S. Magdalen, removed from S. Maximin by Gérard de Roussillon, rested beneath the high altar of the abbey. As the report continued, the Bishop of Autun, although the abbey was independent of him, and placed under the jurisdiction of the Holy See, nevertheless considered himself bound to forbid a pilgrimage founded on a belief in which he could not participate. Appeal was made to the Holy See, and

Sovereign Pontiff, Pascal II., annulled the episcopal decree by a bull, dated 1203, authorised the pilgrimage, and invited all classes of the French nation to take part in it. The effect was marvellous. All France hastened to Vézelay, and that spot became so renowned that Louis VII. went there in the year 1147, accompanied by S. Bernard, who preached there the second crusade, and a number of nobles and knights took the cross, moved by the eloquence of the holy abbot of Clairvaux. From that time, devotion to S. Magdalen was the leading feature of the crusades. Penitents seeking atonement for their sins by the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre,

the crusaders naturally looked to Mary Magdalen, the converted sinner, as their patroness, and knew no other name that they could more worthily cherish and bear with them to that desecrated sepulchre than that of the woman who had so loved Jesus, and merited to be the first to behold Him at the very threshold of His tomb, radiant in resurrection glory. Europe thus restored to Asia the treasure she had received, and Mary returned to Bethany with the banners of Christendom, and her name, mingling with the shouts of the victors or the groans of the dying, recalled to the crusaders those mysteries she had witnessed *on the* very spots they trod.

In 1190 Philip Augustus and Richard Cœur-de-Lion met at Vèzelay to organise the third crusade. The same feelings produced the same results, and later on, S. Louis, on the eve of his second departure for the Holy Land, came to Vèzelay in the year 1267. At the close of the era of the crusades, he rendered to S. Magdalen the last homage that was to be offered to her at a shrine not her own. For, in spite of the great concourse of pilgrims, and the wonderful scenes that occurred there, time had failed to confirm the error that had been made. The protestation of the Bishop of Autun was not forgotton, and proofs were desired of the tran-

slation of the relics of S. Magdalen from S. Maximin to Vèzelay. We meet with a striking mark of this feeling in the journey made to the Sainte-Baume and S. Maximin by S. Louis on his return from the first crusade, and which the Sieur de Joinville thus relates: "After this the king left Yères and came to the city of Aix in Provence, to do honour to the blessed Magdalen, who was only a little distance away, and we went to the place of the Balm, up a very high rock, to a hermitage, where they say S. Magdalen lived for a long time." It was impossible but that the Sieur de Joinville must have heard of the pretensions of the *abbey* of Vèzelay, yet he unhesitat-

ingly asserts that the body of the saint was buried at a little distance from Aix, "*gisoit à une petite journée près d'Aix.*"

The hour at last arrived when God was to reveal His own secret. The error concerning Vézelay had tended only to deepen the veneration in which the saint was held, and also to link her name with that of the most wonderful religious and military movement the world has ever seen, and to confirm the fact of the saint's arrival in Provence, and burial at S. Maximin. At the latter spot was to be found the only link wanting in the chain of evidence, which, when completed, would restore to the religious world the

authority, and illustrious witne
to the truth. We shall now
how, for some time, God had l
preparing all these.

Charles II., nephew of S. L
and son of Charles of Anjou,
ceeded his father as King
Sicily and Count of Provence.
cherished for S. Magdalen
tenderness peculiar to his
and which, though common to

terious obscurity which for six centuries had surrounded the resting-place of her, whom, for his Master's sake, he so loved. He went to S. Maximin, taking with him only a few of his suite, and after questioning the monks and the oldest inhabitants, ordered a search to be made for the tomb. On the 9th December 1279, all previous efforts having been fruitless, the prince, laying aside his robes, took a pickaxe and began digging with the workmen. Soon they struck against the stone of a tomb—it was that of S. Sidoin, on the right of the crypt. The prince ordered the slab to be removed, and the perfume which *was* exhaled, convinced him at once

that hallowed relics were there. He knelt and gazed intently for a moment, then had the sepulchre closed, sealed it with his own seal, and convoked the bishops of Provence to be present at the identification of the relics.

Nine days later, on the 18th of December, in presence of the Archbishops of Arles and of Aix, and of many other bishops and nobles, Charles commanded the removal of the seals he had placed on the sarcophagus. It was opened, and the prince, removing with his own hand the dust that covered the remains, felt something which crumbled beneath his touch. It was a piece of cork, within which was a leaf of parchment in

with writing still legible. The words were these: *The year of our Lord 710, the 10th day of December, in the reign of Eudes, King of France, and during the time the land was ravaged by the infidel Saracens. The body of the beloved and venerable Mary Magdalen has, during the past night, been secretly transferred from her tomb of alabaster into this marble one, from which the body of Sidoin has been removed, so that her relics may be more securely concealed from the above-named perfidious nation.*

King Eudes, here named, was Eudes of Aquitaine, who, declaring his independence when the kingdom of Austrasia was seized by

Pepin le Bref, ruled France south of the Loire.

A document, recording the inscription, its discovery, the names of the archbishops and bishops present, was drawn up by the prince, who, rejoicing at the fulfilment of his long-cherished wish, convoked an assembly of bishops, counts, barons, knights, and magistrates, from Provence and the neighbouring countries, to assist at the solemn translation of those relics, rescued by him from their long oblivion. On the 12th of May 1280, a large concourse of the nobles and people assembled at the tomb, and then, for the first time, did those sainted *relics* receive, in full measure, the

honour which was their due. Hitherto, enshrined in alabaster and hidden in a humble crypt, they had, during the ages of barbarism and persecution, been objects of love and veneration, which, though unvarying, had been unaccompanied by any marks of outward show, and the very precautions necessary for the safety of the relics, had best ensured them in the memory of man, a shrine even deeper than that in which they had reposed. Now gold and precious stones will succeed the alabaster, the humble oratory of S. Maximin will be exchanged for a noble basilica, and a celebrated monastery supersede the narrow cloister of the

Cassianites; countless numbers of kings and pontiffs will crowd to this shrine, and after the sepulchre of our Lord and the shrine of S. Peter, no tomb shall compare with that of the Magdalen.

A third time, in presence of a numerous and illustrious assembly, the Prince of Salerno ordered the seals, which were recognised as intact, to be removed, and the tomb to be opened. The head of the saint was found to be perfect, save the bone of the lower jaw, the tongue also was visible, but dried and clinging to the palate. Of the body nothing was to be seen but the bones, and a sweet perfume exhaled from these remains, now given back to the light of day



and the tender care of the faithful. With reverent hands they raised them from their bed of dust, and every eye was riveted on that brow that once had touched the Saviour's feet, on those sockets from which had fallen the most beautiful of all human tears, on that tongue which had spoken of Jesus to Jesus, and on those knees which had bent to Him in adoring worship.

An undying glory had been promised to Mary, by lips that were infallible ; and this glory was now made manifest, and felt by all. Thirteen centuries had passed away, and still that body existed ; voiceless, lifeless, soulless, but still immortal, and impressing with

reverent awe the gazing multitude of spectators.

It was already known, that on the brow of the Magdalen was to be seen a divine and wondrous token, a particle of soft, transparent flesh glittering on the left temple, and therefore to the right of the spectator, and which inspired all who saw it with the unanimous belief that on that hallowed spot the Saviour's touch had rested, when, on the morning of His resurrection, He said to Magdalen: "*Noli me tangere, ne me touche pas.*" There was no proof of this, but who, on seeing this palpable trace of life surviving a sepulture of thirteen centuries, could believe *aught else*? For the Christian,

word chance is meaningless,
when he sees the laws of
ıre set at defiance, he seeks a
ıer cause, and one that never
without a reason; which rea-
is made clear to those who do
reject the light. Language has
rded the impression made on
e who first beheld this sign of
on the brow of Mary Mag-
n, and to this day it is called
Noli me tangere: a name full
ublimity, created by faith for
ought worthy of herself alone.
five centuries after this first
slation, the *Noli me tangere*
ained on the same place, and
ing the same appearance, and
eputation from the "*Cour des*
ıples," at Aix, consisting of the

first president, an advocate-general and two councillors, bore witness to the authenticity of the fact. It remained attached until the year 1780—eve of an era that would spare no souvenir, and guard no relic—and then, even at that time, the doctors who had been summoned as witnesses by the highest magistracy of the land, declared that the *Noli me tangere* had adhered by virtue of its inherent vitality.

Charles made three divisions of the remains of S. Magdalen; the head, a bone of the right arm with which she had anointed the Saviour's feet, and the other remains. The first of these relics was placed by the prince in a golden case;

the face was covered with crystal, and then enclosed in a movable golden case. The prince's father, Charles I. of Anjou, sent from Naples his own crown of gold enriched with precious stones, in order that it might for ever rest on the brow of the saint. The second relic, the bone of the right arm, was placed in a relicary of silver gilt, made in the shape of an arm, and supported by the figures of four lions; and the other remains were enclosed in a silver shrine.

We must not omit to mention that, during the process of translation, whilst removing each relic separately, they discovered a second inscription engraved on a wooden

tablet, and enclosed in a ball of wax. The words were simply these: "This is the body of S. Mary Magdalen—*Ici est le corps de Sainte Marie-Madeleine.*"

The first step had been taken in the glorification of the saintly relics. They had issued victoriously from the tomb of ages, with a certainty defying all doubt, and with a pomp which testified to the growth of faith and love in the human heart. A princely scion of the royal line of S. Louis with his own hands removed the earth that covered the hallowed remains; episcopal hands touched them with reverent awe; a monarch sent his crown to be placed *on* the brow of the saint; gold

silver, and gems henceforth a
ed her shrine ; a numerous p
hailed its reappearance, and
one end of Christendom t
other all hearts were stirred.
thing alone was wanting ; I
source of glory as of truth,
crown the triumph of her suffi
Charles had already thoug
this, but his personal misfor
and those of his family, form
obstacle to the accomplishm
his pious wish. For six y
prisoner in Spain, he was, d
his captivity, called to the thr
the death of his father, but v
long for the dawn of br
days. He at last regaine
freedom and started for
Boniface VIII., a friend of C

family, then occupied the papal throne. Charles presented him with the two autograph inscriptions found in the tomb of S. Magdalen, and also the document attesting their authenticity, and subscribed by a number of prelates. He opened the relicary containing the head of the saint, and the Sovereign Pontiff beheld the extraordinary sign of life which death had left untouched. The lower jaw, as we have already mentioned, was wanting. Boniface observed this, and remembering that in the church of S. John Lateran was a relic attributed to the saint, he ordered it to be brought. The two relics were compared, and, on placing them to-

gether, were found to correspond so perfectly, that no doubt could be entertained as to their being parts of the same head.

Much impressed by what he saw, Boniface VIII. issued a bull, dated April 6th, 1295, in which he verified the authenticity of the discovery of the body of S. Magdalen, and authorised Charles II., King of Sicily and Count of Provence, who indeed merited the honour, to transfer the monastery of S. Maximin from the order of the Cassianites to that of the Friar Preachers. This illustrious order, then in its early days, was thought by Charles well qualified to carry out the design he had formed, of constructing on the site of the

ancient oratory of S. Maximin a basilica worthy to receive and guard the treasure he had just restored to Christendom. This was the last and most signal honour decreed the saint. Eloquence and poetry may be more durable than monuments, but their voice is heard by few. A monument speaks to the eyes and hearts of all, to the poor as to the rich, to the simple and the learned. Therefore, from time immemorial, from the tower of Babel to the temple of Solomon and the shrine of S. Peter, man has ever sought to express his faith and love under the outward and lasting form of granite and of marble. The friend of Jesus deserved some memorial,

and no site could be so suitable as that which for thirteen centuries had been her tomb, where the piety of the faithful had sought and found her hallowed remains so near to that mountain where she had passed her life in sublime and mystic contemplation.

In the year 1295, Charles caused the plan to be designed, and the edifice to be commenced. It was in the form of the simple oratory which it replaced, namely, a basilica, with three long naves and no transept, and retaining in all its details the gothic character, so that it might be to succeeding generations a faithful memorial of both ancient and modern times. Charles, in spite of his munificent

liberality, was unable to finish the monument so dear to his heart, the completion of which was the work of two centuries, and carried on by the same royal line, so that when good King René, last but one of the race that bore the titles of Count of Provence and King of Sicily, drew near his last hour, he had the happiness of seeing both church and monastery in almost the same state of completion that they are in at the present day. That moment was destined by Providence to witness the termination of the royal line of Anjou, which seemed to have been called to the throne in order to surround S. Mary Magdalen with all the *lustre* that piety and royal munifi-

cence could bestow. Not a prince of this house but visited, in varying fortunes, the Sainte-Baume and S. Maximin, confirming the privileges already granted, and assisting in the completion of the basilica.

At last, after 200 years' oft-interrupted, but persevering efforts, the church arose, such as we now behold it, a monument of art, simple and severe, uniting grace with grandeur, and which in this lonely plain, o'ershadowed by lofty mountains, and surrounded by lowly, scattered dwellings, seems like a vessel that chance has stranded, and which waits but for some strong hand to launch it on the waves once more. And the waves have come! Nations have

been stirred to their very depths, and not only have popes and monarchs visited the basilica of S. Mary Magdalen, but revolutions, which with their thunderclaps, have hurled down thrones, have stayed their wayes at the very threshold of that spot where the humble friend of Jesus dwelt. Bethany is no more, but Jesus has restored to Magdalen the home that she had lost, and both Master and disciple, the woman who loved, and the God who was beloved, dwell together at S. Maximin, as once they dwelt on the sides of Mount Olivet. **Marseilles is the Jerusalem of the new Bethany, and** France is the new and faithful *Judea.*

I say France, for the heritage bequeathed to Provence has descended to her. Our kings were ever mindful of this sacred legacy, and Louis XI., the first to unite the crown of the Capets to that of the line of Provence, gave an example of unbounded veneration for the saint. Mary Magdalen was regarded by him as one of the royal line of France, and his pilgrimage became a precedent to all his descendants. Charles VIII. and Louis XII. gloried in emulating their royal predecessor, and Ann of Brittany, their wife, visited S. Maximin and the Sainte-Baume, and caused a golden statue of herself to be placed below the relicary that enshrined the head of the saint.

Francis I. repaired thither, accompanied by his mother and his wife and sister, to offer his thanksgivings after the battle of Marigny. He had the hospice for strangers put in repair, and ordered the construction of three apartments for the first personages of his court, and named respectively, the king's, the queen's, and the dauphin's apartments. That of his Majesty was in the portion of the convent reserved for the monks. The entrance to the grotto was ornamented by a porch, and the prince's successors, Charles IX. and Louis XIII., following in the steps of their royal predecessor, visited the shrine, the latter arriving there in *the year* 1622, after the termina-

tion of the siege of Montpellier, and the submission of the heretics of Languedoc.

The last king of France who visited the holy places of Provence was Louis XIV.; he arrived at S. Maximin on the 4th February 1660, accompanied by his mother, Ann of Austria, and on the morrow proceeded to the Sainte-Baume and the Saint-Pilon. He then assisted at the translation of the relics from the spot in which they had been previously deposited, and the removal to an urn of porphyry sent from Rome by the General of the Order of Friar Preachers, which urn was placed on the high altar, after the opening and closing, in presence of the king



the treasure it was destined to contain. Again, at the moment when the monarchy had attained its greatest splendour, it came, in the person of its sovereign, to kneel before the shrine of the humble penitent of Bethany, and there leave one ray of the glory which illumed, and still illumes, the age that even now bears the name of Louis XIV.

Was not the promise of Jesus fulfilled? Sixteen centuries had elapsed since the bark arrived that bore S. Magdalen to the shores of France; since then a succession of events confirmed and increased the veneration in which the saint was held. The Sainte-Baume — spot *where Jesus* had resumed that inter-

course interrupted at the Holy Sepulchre—had taken its place among those mountains rendered celebrated by the presence of God. Close at hand was the spot where, from episcopal hands, the saint received a sepulture too memorable to be forgotten, and the alabaster in which they laid her, more durable than that with which she had anointed the Saviour, will ever be held in universal and lasting veneration. That tomb is still there; and when the tide of persecution ceased, the pious faithful set a holy guard before the shrines of the illustrious departed; and at the moment when Europe arose to reconquer the Holy Sepulchre, where S. Mary Magdalen had

kept her solitary watch, Christian chivalry ranged itself among her clients; her name was enshrined in the crusader's heart, and invoked on the battle-field. A whole line of princes dedicated themselves to her service. The most illustrious of the race discovered her body, long concealed through fear of barbaric invasion, and restored to the loving care of the faithful the sacred remains, invested with a halo of glory more radiant than before, and still bearing the living tokens of Divine friendship. A basilica, noted for its beauty and its grandeur, was raised over the cherished relics, which, by their long concealment, had become doubly dear. Popes and monarchs knelt at that shrine;

rival of five kings,[1] and one century beheld eight pontiffs kneel at that hallowed spot,[2] which, when completed, passed from the guardianship of the Counts of Provence descendants of S. Louis, to that of the royal house of France. Thus the first monarchy in the world became protector and client of the friend of Jesus, and when it had reached its zenith and was on the eve of a catastrophe stranger than aught in its past career, it presented itself, in the person of it

[1] In 1322, Philip of Valois, King of France Alphonso IV. of Arragon; Hugues IV., Kin

sovereign, to offer at that venerated shrine the tribute of its deepest homage.

Was this its last tribute? So one might indeed have opined, for a spirit of scepticism had taken possession of men's minds, and a revolution, without parallel, was about to overthrow, with the throne of France, the throne of God also. But whilst the most venerated shrines fell a prey to the tempest, a special providence guarded the basilica and monastery of S. Maximin. An individual, as yet unknown, but bearing a name destined to become immeasurably great, Lucien Bonaparte, brother to the young captain who would *one day* reopen the temples and

l the world with his renown, was
s to whom these two monuments,
rected by the loving care of
rinces and people, owed their
safety. Not a stone was injured,
not an altar destroyed, not a pic-
ture removed from its place; and
when the Divine anger was appeased
and turned aside, France was as-
tounded to find the work of S.
Louis and his descendants still
erect, and owing its preservation
to a new dynasty. The relics of
S. Magdalen were uninjured, and
the head, and the bone of the
right arm, which had been carefully
guarded by loving hands, were
authenticated. The Sainte-Baume
had met with a less happy fate,

and nothing was left save the ro
and part of the forest. The buil
ing was restored, and althou
again overthrown in the year 18
was solemnly consecrated in t
month of May 1822, on the d
after Pentecost, more than 40,0
persons being present. From t
terrace in front of the Saint
Baume, the Archbishop of A
gave the benediction of the Bless
Sacrament to the multitude cov
ing both forest and plain, and t
holy sign of the cross fell in solen
silence on that spot where Jes
Christ again manifested Hims
as this world's conqueror.
shout of acclamation succeeded t
solemn silence of benediction, a
was re-echoed from the depths

eternity whither preceding
ries had returned.[1]

, the stranger descends the
: by which Paris is divided, he
olds a spot the extent and
uments of which rivet his at-
tion. On one side is the palace
the French monarchs, and in
nt of the spectator, at the ex-
me end of a long avenue, rises
triumphal arch. The perspective
ossing this view is bounded at
ch end by two temples—the one
at of laws, the other the temple
God. In the centre towers an
gyptian obelisk, hidden by a
onument invisible to the eye, but

The restoration of the Sainte-Baume was
e chiefly to M. de Villeneuve-Bargemont,
éfet of the "Bouches du Rhône," and to
Chevalier, Préfet of "Var."

ever present to the minds of all—the scaffold of Louis XVI. On this spot all France is represented—kings, arms, liberty, religion, and revolution. On the temple dedicated to God is to be seen this inscription, *Au Dieu très bon et très grand, sous l'invocation de Sainte Marie-Madeleine.* Mary Magdalen is there, in this nineteenth century, in the sight of France and the whole world, and the place of honour that she fills was destined by a triumphant conqueror to receive in marble, bronze, and gold, the names of his battles and the statues of his soldiers, and he himself was to tower above them all, apotheosised, as it were, in this Pantheon which, in his rash pride,

he had named the temple of glory!

He fell! and in his place has come the humble penitent who with her tears laved the feet of Jesus; it is she whom we behold depicted on the façade of this monument, kneeling, as of old, at the feet of her Master, and within the building, beneath a splendid vaulted canopy, we see her borne by angels in the hour of ecstasy, which was even on earth the reward of her love.

By the favour of Providence this temple has received some portion of S. Mary Magdalen's hallowed relics. In 1785, the Infanta of Spain, Ferdinand, Duke of Parma, desired to obtain some of the relics

for his own chapel. Louis XVI., to whom he had imparted his wishes, gave the monks of S. Maximin order to comply with the Infanta's desire, and the porphyry urn into which Louis XIV. had transferred the ancient relicary, having been opened with the required solemnity and precaution, the prior removed a considerable portion of the relics and transmitted them himself to the Duke of Parma. In 1810 this and other treasures were brought to Paris, with many other spoils, and after having passed from the hands of an exiled cardinal to those of the venerable Madame de Soyecourt, Superioress of the Carmelites in *the Rue* de Vaugirard, was at last

handed over to Monseigneur de Quélen, Archbishop of Paris, by whom the relics were presented to the church of S. Mary Magdalen.

Thus, of the three divisions of the relics made by Charles II. of Anjou, the head and a bone of the right arm were saved from the fury of the Revolution, and left undisturbed at S. Maximin; the remaining relics, placed by Louis XIV. in an urn on the high altar, have disappeared, but a portion of them having been saved in the manner above related, the urn of porphyry has given place to the most splendid temple ever raised in honour of the penitent of Bethany.

Her glory had lasted for cen-

turies, and time had but witnessed its augmentation; only the sacred guard, that for five hundred years had kept watch at the tomb of the saint, was no longer there. The basilica and monastery, the crypt and its sepulchres, the guarded relics and the memories of that life that witnessed the birth of Christianity, and that of Christ Himself, were still there. The building was erect, but the pilgrim's heart was moved by sorrow and regret. He gazed at this silent pile, triumphant over men and time, and felt that something was missing. He knelt in prayer to the fervent lover of souls, whose shrine he had come to visit; all *around* breathed to him her name,

ıer glory, and her virtues, and yet his prayer was mingled with sadness, and he felt as those who revisit a much-loved spot, and seek in vain for something that they have loved and find no more. But God's goodness far exceeds our desires, and we have lived to witness that empty cloister re-peopled, the ancient pomp renewed, and the past issue from its tomb with a youth of which one would have thought it incapable, and it seemed to us that we too heard those words that fell from the Saviour's lips when He addressed to her who could scarcely credit His resurrection, that word of reproach and illumination : *Mary !*

EPILOGUE.

THE tomb of Mary Magdalen at S. Maximin is the third tomb in the world, and ranks next to that of our Lord's sepulchre at Jerusalem, and S. Peter's at Rome. The Blessed Virgin, Mother of God, had no tomb, for scarcely had death touched her, when she was borne triumphantly to heaven. S. John, the beloved disciple, has left us no tomb and no relics, for by Divine permission he has been hidden from our veneration, as if to limit our search for him to the pages of his Gospel alone. There remain, then, but three celebrated tombs; that of our Lord, which

though taken from us by the infidel, still holds the whole world subject. That of S. Peter, who in Rome presides over the destinies of Christendom, and from the dust where he is laid listens to the prayers of succeeding generations; and lastly, the tomb of Mary Magdalen—of her, who, though occupying a lower place in the sacred hierarchy, was even nearer the heart of Jesus, and to whom none can refuse the third place in the list of the names so celebrated in the history of the Church.

Perhaps some one will ask, at the conclusion of our work, why the Divine Master of souls should have thus chosen a poor sinner, and bequeathed her to us as the

most striking example of sanctity. The reason is easy to find. Innocence is but one drop in the waters of this world; repentance is the ocean that envelops and preserves it; and therefore it was worthy of God thus to exalt repentance, and in His Old Testament, as in the New, He has given us instances of spiritual resurrection as the effect of penitence—David and Mary Magdalen. The first of these we should have imagined could never have been surpassed, so deep and tender are the traits in which he has been depicted to us. A mere shepherd, tending his flocks on the hills of Bethlehem, the sight of an insult offered to God *and to his* country transformed

him into a soldier. His sling killed the blasphemer, and, radiant with victory, David in one day gained the nation's heart. Jealousy, the attendant of heroes, delayed not to stand between him and glory. The very king envied him his youth, and, tormented by a presentiment of his future greatness, in the moments of melancholy to which he was a prey, Saul meditated the destruction of the youth. Then it was that David, to appease Saul, first touched that harp which would hereafter sing the mysteries of God, and stir the heart of generations yet unborn. Poetry linked itself to courage, with friendship, sorrow, and religion, and at last

this youth ascended that throne, henceforth to be for ever called the throne of David. Then, at the very summit of prosperity, more blessed by God than Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he, chosen ancestor of the Messiah, fell at once into the sins of adultery, treason, and homicide. Happy fall! that made of the guilty one the immortal king of penitence, and gave to all us sinners tears for our faults, and words wherewith to bear our tears into the very presence of our God. What Christian but has wept with David? Who but has found in his verses the very unction needed by his heart? The Gospel itself cannot efface the Psalms, and this *king*, dishonoured by his crime,

has become the author of our virtues.

Such, in the Old Testament, was the model given of penitence, and none could foresee in what manner God, in the New Testament, would set by the side of His Divine Son, another and more Divine type of penitence. But He has done so. Mary Magdalen is a simple woman, with no history but that of her sin; she has no sword, nor sceptre, nor harp, nor prophetic eye; she is a sinner. She speaks but once in the pages of the Gospel—at the tomb of her Master—and her words are simple. But, first, she is a woman—that is to say, a being in whom all stain is the most ineffaceable; and this

difference between the Old and New Testament type is a sublime token of greater mercy. It is no longer man, but woman, who is to be ransomed by penance. Before Jesus came on earth, no woman stained by vice had ever been rendered great; only Christ has effected this, and, continuing His work, He has from age to age pursued the sinner to bring her back to glory, and to give her endless life and youth. David has, in unrivalled poetry, immortalised his penitence, and those verses have won him immortality. Mary Magdalen had but tears to give, but she shed them on the Saviour's feet; she had but a vase of perfume, but with that perfume she

anointed the body of the Son of God. Simplicity is here more grand, affection more deep; it is no longer a man who weeps and loves, but a woman—a woman who has gazed on God, has recognised Him, and who, comparing with His infinite purity her infinite degradation, has no doubt but that her love can win her pardon. Humble and lowly, when she has found the grace she sought, she does not withdraw from those feet, the very touch of which has made her pure; she takes advantage of the favour she has won, only to follow and to minister to Jesus. She follows Him to the cross and tomb. Parted from her Master, *the sole* object of her life, she

withdraws from those spots where she had lived with Him, and, seeking an asylum on a distant shore, hides her souvenirs and herself in a silent cave. The angels alone know that spot, and bring her that hidden manna which gives birth to ecstatic joy. At last she dies of love at the moment when, from episcopal hands, she receives the sacred body of her God.

What more shall I say? Those spots so celebrated and so revered — the grotto, tomb, crypt, the basilica and monastery, — those monuments which grace and nature, ages and princes, have raised in honour of Mary Magdalen, are all there, but poor, desolate, and *defaced*. One reaches the Sainte

Baume by crumbling steps and mouldering walls; the chamber of the French kings has disappeared, and the humblest pilgrim scarce finds a shelter. In the hospice there are left only the sockets in which the beams rested, and the monastery, hastily restored, offers to the monks only a few cells separated by boarding, and shared with the stranger. Between these two ruins is the grotto of the penitent, void of those ornaments bestowed by the loving reverence of princes and of people. The splendid lamps, to use the words of Tacitus, are conspicuous by their absence. Inglorious marbles form the chapel of the saint, and behind the altar, on that mysterious

rock where she passed hours
ecstatic reverie, is seen a profa
statue unworthy of the sacr
spot.

If we quit Sainte-Baume a
return to S. Maximin by the ro
that the saint went to seek h
tomb, we shall find the same mi
ture of indigence and grandeu
The basilica is there, still co
manding the admiration of t
artist and the homage of t
Christian, but incomplete from i
portico; it mournfully leads us
the crypt where S. Maximin la
the body of S. Magdalen in i
alabaster shrine. The alabaster
there, and at its side are rang
the tombs which a fervent pie
erected in close proximity to th

celebrated tomb; but what desolation, darkness, and sadness reign within these walls!

Happy those catacombs which never knew glory, and which sleep in untroubled repose! Here are the traces of pilgrims' knees; everything breathes of a veneration that has never been interrupted, but there are no traces of visible magnificence, and only to the eye of the soul is God present. A poor wooden relicary, given by the peasants, now covers that head where the brother of S. Louis, Charles I. of Anjou, placed his royal crown of Sicily, and before which Ann of Brittany, twice Queen of France, was represented by a kneeling figure

wrought in gold. Episcopal[1] hands, it is true, are about to repair the ravages of time and restore to S. Mary Magdalen a portion of that splendour which has been hers so long. But how much yet

[1] Mgr. Henri Jordany, Bishop of Fréjus. Every one knows the kindness shown by this prelate to the order of S. Dominic. On his promotion to the episcopacy, he visited the Basilica of S. Maximin, and was inspired with the desire to restore to the Friar Preachers the sanctuary which they had erected, embellished, and guarded for centuries, and where many of them had died in the odour of sanctity. It was only in 1850 they could respond to this desire, and take possession of the convent. In June 1860 Mgr. Jordany organised the beautiful Feast of the Translation of the relics of S. Mary Magdalen. Seven bishops were present, and a number of clergy, and many guilds and people. Nothing would have been wanting to this feast, had not Père Lacordaire fallen ill on his journey thither, and so deprived them of his words, and saddened them by the presentiment of his approaching death.

remains to be done! How many shades to chase away!

Whoever you are who read these lines, if ever you have known tears of penitence or those of love, refuse not to Mary Magdalen, who has loved and wept so much, one drop of that perfume with which she embalmed your Saviour's feet. Forsake not the grotto visited by angels; forget not the tomb where Jesus concealed her from the rage of barbarism, in order to give her back to the homage of a Christian age; disdain not that head that survived all else, because the finger of God had rested there. Bring your offering, small though it be, and contribute to the restoration of one of the grandest and dearest

monuments of Christendom; brin
there the tribute of your faith
your vows, your needs, and let i
not be said that France, to whor
Jesus Christ entrusted, in the pe
son of Mary Magdalen, the trea
sure of penitence and love, ha
ever proved faithless to that hol
mission.[1] As for me, who, thoug
unworthy of the honour, hav
brought back to the mountain an

[1] This appeal has been responded to b
Catholic France. To the committee of th
"*Saints lieux de Provence*," Père Lacordai
proposed four different works—1st. The co
struction of an hostelry at the foot of th
mountain; 2d. The restoration of the grotto
3d. The construction of a convent near th
grotto for the fathers, to whose care th
shrine of the saint was entrusted; 4th. Th
building of a dwelling some little distanc
from the grotto, for the use of pilgrims. Th
hostelry has been completed, the restoratio
of the grotto, to which Mgr. Dupanloup h

basilica the ancient order charged by Providence to keep unceasing watch before that sacred shrine, may my last line be written on that spot, and as Mary Magdalen on the eve of the passion, so may I break the frail vase of my thoughts, and scatter them at the feet of Jesus!

so materially contributed, is in progress of completion, and soon it is hoped that the humble monastery will be commenced. The pilgrims' house awaits the moment when God shall inspire the faithful to consecrate their alms to this purpose.

FINIS.











